

Untold

by muggleborn.dragon.ryder

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Summary: There are lots of little stories that remain untold...a collection of drabbles and one-shots set in the 'To Be Loved the Way You Love Me' AU. Most one-shots will feature Hiccup/Stoick father/son. Rated T for torture, trauma and angst. Cover art by the beautiful RazzlePazzleDooDot

## 1. Sanity

Untold

Chapter 1 - Sanity

Summary: I wondered how a wolf could look so innocent in sheep's clothing...

**\*\*A/N:** To any of my new readers, you don't actually have to read To Be Loved the Way You Love Me to understand the things that go on in this story, mostly. You really only need to know that Hiccup comes from Outcast Island to understand. Oh, and that he crashed on Berk. Oh and that he began-**\*\***

**\*\*You know what, maybe you should read the fic first before reading this xD I warn you, though, it's 47 chapters long. \*\***

**\*\*Yeah. So. Here's my first chapter. I really only did this because I've been wanting to do one-shots on all the Hiccup/Stoick moments that I couldn't fit in To Be Loved the Way You Loved Me or Starlight, Star Bright. There was originally more stuff for them in Starlight Star Bright, but a lot of other crap got in the way. I think it was the plot. xD\*\***

**\*\*Also, I've been really wondering lately what Stoick must've been thinking for the duration of chapter 30. I mean, this boy looked like a male version of his wife. This boy looked so much like her it hurt. And furthermore, Stoick genuinely cared about Hiccup very deeply for**

a while there in To Be Loved the Way You Love Me, and you can't expect him to just forget all about that in two seconds, after learning Hiccup is an Outcast. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I knew something was wrong from the moment the Murderous left our shores. My gaze rested on Hiccup, who seemed unable to look at anyone; his hands were clasped in front of him, and he stared resolutely at the ground.<p>

"What's going on?" I tried to sound bright and cheery in the hopes that it would bring a smile to someone's face, but no such luck; everybody stared stonily back at me, unwilling to answer.

A little bit of panic came then as I ran through the possibilities in my head. 'For Thor's sake,' I thought to myself, 'this island only has a couple hundred people. How much could have happened while I was gone?'

"Hiccup?" I turned to him for his explanation, hoping he would do or say something to diffuse the tension.

He didn't look at me; he hunched slightly, like he thought it very likely that I would lean over and strike him at any moment, but he gave no other indication that he had heard me or even that I had spoken at all.

"What's going on?" I tried to control the rising panic in my tone; why wasn't anybody speaking?

"WHAT'S GOING ON IS THAT THIS BOY IS AN OUTCAST!" yelled Mildew. He was pointing his staff directly at Hiccup, having pushed and shoved to get to the front of the crowd, I supposed.

I stared at him for a second, waiting for him to laugh. Waiting for somebody to laugh and tell me this was all a big joke.

Nobody laughed.

Everybody stared quietly, expressionlessly at me, waiting for my final word. I scowled over at Mildew, reminding myself that the old man was always trying to stir stuff up and that there was no reason to believe him. "That's not funny, Mildew," I snapped.

"Good," he replied. "Because it's no joke, Stoick."

"Hiccup?" I turned to the red-haired boy on my other side, determined not to believe a word Mildew said until Hiccup proved or disproved it.

There was a short silence in which I held my breath.

"I'm sorry," Hiccup whispered brokenly, still studying the grass as if it held all the answers. "I meant to tell you before..."

He was joking. He had to be. I knew that the boy was many things, but there was no way he could be...just no way...

He stared at the ground. I stared at him. The village looked at

me.

"I...I meant to tell you," he whispered in a quivering voice, one I was sure he was using to hide tears. "I just...I just never got around to it-"

"Oh, yeah?" I couldn't bear to hear his chatter anymore. Every word he said was like a knife, cutting me all over. His words were sharpened knives. How could I have ever believed him? He had made a fool out of me. He couldn't be an Outcast...but he was.

I drew in a rattling breath, trying to think straight. "When did you plan to tell us, Hiccup? A month? Two? When were you going to be done taking advantage of us?"

Hiccup shuddered again, doing the odd, tensing jerk of the shoulders, like he expected a blow on the back of the head. "I...I wasn't taking advantage," he mumbled. "I swear, I wasn't. I...I was only..."

"Only what?" I whispered when he didn't finish.

"I'm sorry, Dad," he quivered.

My heart tore the second I heard the simple word; I was a Viking and a word should not have so much power over me.

How could he have done this to me, to any of us? Was he really that kind of person, the kind to take advantage of other people's kindness? Or was he being honest? Had he honestly intended to tell me he was an Outcast? How exactly do you explain that?

Dad. Dad. Dad. Dad. The word echoed in my brain, refusing to be silenced. How dare this boy call me dad. How dare he act like I am his father. How dare he act like I am a father figure to him.

Clearly, I'm nothing to him.

"Don't." My voice was trembling when I first managed to spit out the word, but I hastily tried to correct it. "Don't you ever call me that again. I am not your father...and you..."

He met my eyes for just a second, before quickly dropping his gaze back to the ground, hands clenched into fists.

"You're not my son."

He gasped slightly, like the words had physically hurt him. "I..."

"Shut up," I snarled at him. I should've felt pleasure at his fearful, obedient nod but all I felt was disgusted - with him and with myself. How could we have gone from talking and laughing together, to me tucking him in for the love of Odin, to...this?

"Get the hell off my island, Hiccup. You are no longer welcome here. Berk is no longer your refuge."

He gave a shaky nod, turning in the direction of the forge.

"Wait a second, Stoick," Mildew butted in. "I thought we sent Outcasts off the island."

"Are you deaf?" I snapped harshly at him, feeling rage pulsating through my veins. It felt extraordinarily good to be able to use it on somebody else, because it hurt too much to think of Hiccup long enough to get angry with him. "I am sending him off the island!"

"I thought we did it...differently," Mildew argued, a sinister emphasis on 'differently'.

I closed my eyes against his harsh words. I couldn't think. I couldn't do this. For all the times my father had prepared me for trying situations, he had never prepared me for this.

The crowd whispered among themselves for several long moments.

"Yes, do it, Stoick!" Called a man from the crowd.

The other Vikings roared their approval.

"Fine!" I snapped at them. "Hold him down!"

The boy gave a scream then, a scream of a shattered and broken heart losing the only thing he really had left to care about; the sound of pure terror.

I tried to block it out as I unsheathed my sword, hearing myself scream at me that this was beyond inhuman. But I had been pushed too far beyond inhuman in the last five seconds to care. I stood over Hiccup, looking down at him, different thoughts flying through my head. I wondered what his last thought would be.

My grip on my sword was slippery with sweat. I stared at him, wondering how a wolf could look so innocent in sheep's clothing.

'How could you?' I asked him silently. 'Tell me, how could you?!'

I raised the sword, determined to do it...drawing ever closer...he was right underneath me, now...all I had to do was plunge the sword in his chest andâ€¦

My mind shut down, refusing to let me imagine the boy's blood on my hands.

Hoark leaned over and shakily rolled up Hiccup's sleeve. Pale skin broken by rough and jagged scars stared back at me. My sword was shaking in my hand. I knelt down next to him, not sure if I would ever be able to forgive myself for what I was doing.

I plunged the very tip of the sword into his skin. I heard him give a gasp, but I ignored it. I couldn't think about him. I couldn't think at all.

I went slowly, letter by letter, wondering if I'd ever be able to think again after doing this.

\_T.\_

Would I one day close my eyes and see his laughing face behind my lids?

\_R.\_

Or would I remember him this way forever, frozen in fear and horror?

\_A.\_

Horror for me.

\_I. \_

Fear of me.

\_T.\_

He was afraid of me.

\_O.\_

I never wanted him to be afraid of me.

\_R.\_

I slowly pulled the sword away from his arm. He lifted his head shakily, trying to get a glimpse, but Spitelout shoved his head roughly back down onto the grass. A part of me was ready to snap at my brother not to hurt him, but I kept silent.

I approached him slowly, raising my sword, determined not to meet his eye. If I did, would I see fear there? Would there be contempt?

"Please." He whispered shakily.

You Outcasts are all the same, I thought angrily at him. Always thinking begging can get you out of it.' Well, it couldn't. Not this time. This was beyond dirty, the trick he had pulled on us, the trick he had been pulling on us since midsummer.

"You really think begging is going to get you anywhere?" I demanded coldly of him.

"Look after him," he pleaded. "Look after Toothless. You know him, he trusts you...you know he's not bad, Stoick." His small voice trembled on my name and suddenly I felt as inhuman as the voice in my head screamed at me that I was.

How could I hurt a child? And not just any child...but one who looked so much like Val...

My sword dangled dangerously near the ground. His selflessness hit me hard. He was even like Val in that sense, in the bright bravery and selflessness she had always had. How could I hurt a child who was spending his last few minutes begging for someone else?

"You're begging me to protect him," I whispered, almost unable to comprehend it. "I...you..."

His green eyes turned suddenly hopeful and I felt furious with myself. I would lock the Night Fury in the deepest dungeon and let him rot without a rider, for all I cared. Hell, I could've killed that thing with my bare hands.

My anger burned fiercely. This boy had won my pity, my affection and my love far too many times. He did not deserve it anymore. "An inch away from death," I spat, "and all you can think of is-"

"Toothless." He interrupted. "Please."

Didn't he know how hard he was making this for me? I couldn't do this. I couldn't do this. Didn't he know that it was taking every ounce of my self-control to stand here with my sword?

I wanted to do that - yet I knew I couldn't.

I had to be strong.

I clenched my jaw and raised my shaking sword, determined to kill him, to watch him bleed out.

And then he flinched. I'm sure he wasn't aware he did it, but he did. He flinched, ducking his head, the last of his strength leaving him.

And the last of my resolve left me. I couldn't do it. My sword slipped from my hand just as I heard a great roar from somewhere nearby. I looked around, unsure what it had been, before spotting Toothless rushing from the forge, green eyes alight with panic.

He charged over to Hiccup, shooting flames at his attackers, grabbing Hiccup with his teeth and tossing him up on his back and riding away with him, as far and fast as he could.

I should've been angry. But I looked at the sky, all lit up with stars, and I could not be anything but grateful to Thor, for saving the boy and for saving my last shred of humanity, my last shred of sanity.

## 2. The Real Decision

Untold

### Chapter 2: The Real Decision

Summary: I knew I recognized him when he came...

**\*\*A/N:** So, one of my reviewers saved my butt by suggesting this and a couple other things to write about :D I didn't have any other ideas, but she began suggesting things and :D this was born.\*\*

**\*\*It** was originally supposed to be Stoick's POV of finding out Hiccup is his son, but the main plot point of that kind of got crushed in all the excitement :D I honestly don't know what happened, although I tried to keep Alvin's words at the forefront of Stoick's mind the best I could, as I don't know how somebody could be all like, 'oh,

lolz, apparently I have a son' and forget two seconds later.\*\*

\*\*Like I said, I'm pretty terrible with action and threatening villains and everything, so this chapter isn't as good as the last.\*\*

\*\*Well, okay, I did okay with Alvin in SSB and TBLTWYLM, but that's because that's Hiccup's POV and in my AU Alvin scares the bejeebies out of Hiccup.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Alvin found me sitting in my house, struggling to remember what to do. I was trying not to think about last night. I was trying not to think about anything.<p>

Gobber was sitting in the chair opposite me, nervously fiddling with his prosthetic hand, like he had something important to say but was refusing to say it.

The first words out of Alvin's mouth surprised me. He looked me up and down, like he thought maybe I was trying to hide something. "Well?" he snapped. "Where is he?"

"Where's who?" I demanded, rising from my chair and taking a step towards him. And meanwhile, I was also struggling with the thought of how the hell he got in here. The snow, I realized. The snow on Berk always blocked approaching ships from view in wintertime.

"You know where he is, Stoick," Alvin sneered. "He's been on your island for months."

A sick feeling overcame me and I had a nasty idea that I knew who he was talking about, but I played dumb. "There are a lot of people who have been on my island for months."

Alvin gave a frustrated grunt. "You know who I'm looking for, Stoick. I'm looking for your boy."

My brow knitted and suddenly my mind shot, not to Hiccup, but to the little stillborn all those years ago. I was about to politely tell him thanks, but I didn't exactly have a son, but he spotted my confusion and a mocking grin curled his lips upward.

"Oh. Wait. You didn't figure it out yet?"

"Didn't figure what out?" I asked cautiously. I could almost sense Gobber getting ready to charge, even without a weapon, but I wasn't thinking right then; I was locked in Alvin's words.

"Well, if you haven't, I don't want to ruin the surprise," Alvin shrugged, but his eyes sparkled with malice.

"What are you talking about?" I took several quick steps forward, until I was closer to Alvin than I was to Gobber. "What do you mean, I haven't figured it out?"

"It's alright," Alvin said with mock gentleness. "I understand. A total stranger washes up on your island, you don't expect it to be

your son."

The words hit me like a sledgehammer and a thousand thoughts ran through my head.

\_Wait. Is he talking about Hiccup?\_

No. He couldn't be. Hiccup was an Outcast.

I knew it. He looked too much like Val to not beâ€|

No. He was an Outcast.

\_He looks like her. It's the only explanation.\_

No.

\_You know you recognized him when he came. You recognized him, and it hurt you to do so. You knew who he was. Why are you trying to hide from it?\_

Although I had, at first, not wanted to believe that Hiccup was an Outcast, I now found myself running firstly to that excuse for defense. If he really was my son, thenâ€|

My mind jumped again to the stillborn. Butâ€|no. That was too far-fetched. My son was dead. I didn't have one.

\_Yes, you do.\_

"You lie, Alvin," I accused him, already reaching for my sword. The hilt was comforting and cool in my hands, reminding me I had a way to defend myself if need be.

Alvin smirked. "Well, I don't suppose it really matters if you know or not, because he's my property, now. Which reminds me, you haven't been very compliant today, soâ€|" he let his voice trail off. "I'm afraid that I'm going to have to take Hiccup by force if you don't hand him over."

His hand drifted casually towards his own sword.

"He's not here," I snarled at him.

He raised his eyebrows disbelievingly.

If there had still been a door, it would have flown open when Savage, his second-in-command, came pelting into the house, panting for breath, but Alvin had kicked it off its hinges when he'd entered.

\_Was he my son?\_

"Sir," Savage panted, "there's no sign of the boy anywhere."

"Wellâ€|" Alvin turned back to me, running a finger down his chin, like he was thinking. He smoothed down his tangled beard. "If you're telling the truth and he's not hereâ€|" he pulled out his sword and pointed it directly at me. "Where is he?"



Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Savage slipping out of the room, obviously following an unspoken order of Alvin's.

Was the boy really my son?

"I don't know," I replied honestly.

"Did you see him leave?"

"Yes."

"Which direction was he going?"

"I couldn't tell. He was on his Night Fury."

"Your life and the lives of your village are hanging on your answers, Stoick. So if I were you, I'd give me some clearer answers."

"I can't tell you anything more," I told him and I was being completely truthful. Hiccup could be anywhere in the Archipelago for all I knew right now.

"He didn't tell you anything?" Alvin demanded. "Nothing about where he was going, anything?"

And still, burning in the back of my mind, pulsed the thoughts that maybe Hiccup really was my son, or maybe not. Maybe Alvin was just playing with me. Or it could be a double bluff; he probably figured I wouldn't take his words seriously, so he trusted that I'd never believe him and that I'd willingly hand my son " or Hiccup " over to him without batting an eye.

"No." I told him.

"He was here!" Alvin snapped. "He was here, just days ago! Why did he leave?"

Did Alvin know how could Alvin have known?

Was he really my son? Was he really my son?

I had to lie. I knew I had to lie.

He couldn't be. He couldn't be.

"Did you kick him out?" Alvin rasped. "You didn't know he was an Outcast, did you? You kicked him out, didn't you?"

I struggled to find a better answer, one that wouldn't give everything away.

"Only the strong can belong," Alvin repeated slowly, a smile curling his face. "Thank you for your help, Stoick. I think we can find the boy from here. You won't mind me taking him off your hands, will you?"

He was an Outcast.

I tried to speak, but I was frozen. I'd always known Alvin was clever

â€" I just never knew how telling silence could be.

And the worst part was, I was no longer sure who the enemy was â€" Alvin, Hiccupâ€|?

Should I be afraid for Hiccup, or glad that he was going back to Outcast Island, the way he probably wanted to?

But what if he was my son?

An Outcast appeared at Alvin's side, panting and gasping for breath, just like Savage had. "Chief," he rasped breathlessly, "Chief, he's here."

"What?" Alvin's attention was momentarily diverted.

"He just flew in," the Outcast replied. "He just suddenlyâ€|appeared."

Alvin considered for a long moment. I reached for my sword.

"Right." Alvin nodded. "You watch these two. No, wait â€" on second thought, bring them out, along with us."

The Outcast nodded, turning to us with a nervous air. I dropped my hand, not wanting the Outcast to alert Alvin.

The Outcast turned back around and led us out into the middle of the village, where Alvin had us all drop our weapons as we got nearer.

"I don't want any funny business, you see," he smiled.

I heard voices as we drew nearer and nearer to where the Outcast was leading us.

"â€|telling your friends to loosen their grip a little?"

I rounded the corner just behind the Outcast and saw Hiccup standing there, glaring at the Outcasts that were holding the Jorgenson boy, the Thorston twins, the Hofferson girl and the Ingerman teen by their hair.

Alvin slowly stepped in front of Hiccup, a smile lighting up his face. I saw Hiccup go rigid, but I brushed it off as my imagination.

"Hello, Hiccup," Alvin whispered, bending down next to him and running a finger down his chin. "Long time, no see."

Was he really my son? I wondered, pain exploding in my heart at the sight of him. I clenched my jaw and tried to push it back, but the constant worry that Alvin was lying wouldn't leave me alone.

Hiccup flinched away from the man's touch and something about the reaction brought me pain, although I didn't know why â€" the pain of betrayal and shame and love, all at the same time. When I'd stood over him with the sword, he'd flinched away from me, too, in that exact same way.

"Now, Hiccup," Alvin whispered, "you happen to be the exact person I came here for."

And I made my decision then: Hiccup was an Outcast through and through and I was going to forget this nonsense about him being my son.

"I thought I might be," he replied in a casual sort of way, but I saw him and I saw his hands were shaking slightly, the only outward sign of fear he gave.

My resolve weakened slightly at hearing him, at seeing him, at seeing the boy trying so hard to hide his fear. Fear of what? I wondered, my thoughts going back to Alvin. What was he so afraid of? He was part of Alvin's tribe. Why would the man hurt him?

"But I mean, c'mon, Alvin, a full-scale invasion? Just for me? I'm flattered, really. I didn't think I'd mean quite that much to you." Despite the quiver in his voice, he managed to give an arrogant smirk.

I saw Alvin grinding his teeth and felt two things at once: a flash of pride for Hiccup, for hiding his fear so well and masking it by mocking his enemy and a bolt of fear for him.

I made my real decision then and I whispered a quick prayer to Odin to keep the boy safe.

### 3. I Can Hear You

Untold

#### \_Chapter 3: I Can Hear You\_

Summary: "Can you hear me?" I whispered frantically, pausing as I held my breath.

"I can hear you."

\*\*A/N: So, though I rarely do requests, I answered the request of FirenzeFox. I hope I made it as good as he/she wanted it to be, but I'm not so sure I did. I was actually planning on starting an arc, and the request pushed it back a little, but I knew the 'I Can Hear You' scene would take less time than the arc. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup disappeared in the frenzy of battle for several long minutes, but when I saw him again, I swear my heart stopped. I saw him as a limp figure in the grass and, worried, I strode over to make sure he was alright. I knew it was a bad idea to turn my back on the battle, but I had to see.<p>

I scrambled over to Hiccup and that was when my heart skipped a few beats. There he was, lying on the ground, his leg bleeding horribly. An Outcast leaned over him, holding a shining axe, cutting through his pants leg.

"Get away from him!" I bellowed, because it was the only thing I

could do.

The Outcast barely had time to look up before I barreled forward. I didn't have time to draw my sword, but that didn't matter â€" the swift punch to the jaw was enough to derail him for a few moments.

I drew my sword, just in case he got back up, but it appeared that my fist and his impact with the ground had knocked him out. My sword clattered to the ground, forgotten and I knelt down next to Hiccup.

"Hiccup?" I whispered. My voice came out shaky and I tried to steady it. "Hiccup, are you all right? Can you hear me?"

His answer was a low groan.

I took a deep breath, unsure if it was relief or fear coursing through me.

His eyes opened slowly, just an inch or so and he locked gazes with me for a second before letting them shut again.

I picked him up carefully â€" even if he was still conscious, he was in no state to defend himself. He could easily get trampled or stolen away by Alvin once more without anybody watching him. I held him close, feeling an icy numbness spreading through one arm, the arm that supported his head; melted snow was dripping off of his hair onto my arm.

I smoothed down his wet hair and felt his blood dripping onto my other arm. I inhaled sharply when I realized how limp he had gone in my arms. "Oh, son," I whispered, "can you hear me?"

He groaned and mumbled something unintelligible.

I blinked and found my eyes were wet with tears as I pressed my ear to his heart. And there I heard a weak, barely there heartbeat â€" he was hanging on, but without medical attention, he would soon bleed out.

I had to get him out of here and get him healed and soon.

I glanced down at the angry red blood still pouring from his leg and felt a kind of panic seize me â€" his leg looked too mangled and bloody to keep.

"I can hear you," he whispered weakly. I smiled slightly down at him, the worry wiped carelessly away for a few seconds. He could hear me. That was all that mattered.

"Oh, Hiccup," I breathed and I hugged him tightly.

A voice pulled me out of our embrace. "You can't hide him forever, you know."

I looked unwillingly up to see Alvin, his eyes flicking over Hiccup in a hungry, greedy way â€" a way that made me tighten my grip on him just slightly. It was like Alvin was seeing Hiccup in another light than I did â€" like he liked the sight of Hiccup's blood.

"I'm coming to find him. I always get him back in the end, Stoick. He's mine, you know."

I felt Hiccup tense slightly in my arms and I suddenly understood what it meant to feel protective of somebody, loving them like they were your own flesh and blood whether they were or not, feeling like you would go down fighting, if only to defend them, to give them a few more minutes.

My grip on him tightened again. I was never letting Alvin touch this boy again.

I opened my mouth to speak, but it wasn't my voice that made the sound. It came out as a mere whisper, but I heard it.

"I'm not yours, Alvin." The attempt at bravery in his voice melted something inside me. He was trying to act unafraid. I knew the truth from his rigid posture; I knew he was scared.

"You can't fight with him," Alvin continued, completely ignoring Hiccup, his eyes glittering with malice. "You know that, don't you?"

"You're beaten, Alvin," I told him simply, although I wanted nothing more than to race away from the battle and just hold Hiccup close, hold him close and take away all his pain, because I could feel him stirring gently in my arms, clutching weakly at his leg. I wanted nothing more than to make sure he was okay, but my grip tightened on him. \_A chief is a leader first and a man second. \_"Go from this place now."

Alvin opened his mouth, looking like he thought he had anything to say to that, but I interrupted him before he could speak. "A good chief knows when he is leading his men into a suicide mission." \_Yet another thing that makes you an unworthy chief. \_"I'm afraid if you attempt to fight us again, your tribe's numbers will be depleted massively."

Alvin growled something under his breath.

"The Hooligan tribe does not believe in keeping slaves," I continued, trying to be quiet but firm. "But you will find you and your men working for us if you don't leave right now, in peace."

I could feel Hiccup starting to turn over in my arms, pushing against me. I pushed him back down slowly and he went still.

Alvin chewed his lip angrily and raised a fist. Instantly, an axe came out of the crowd of my tribe, sinking deep into a post just behind him. He turned and saw the blade just an inch from his nose; it was too accurate a shot.

Alvin growled softly. "Set my men free," he said in a quiet voice.

"Done," I whispered, beckoning to my tribe. A few Hooligans gathered around me, taking out their weapons. They followed Alvin back to his boats and waited until he had climbed in to release the weaponless members of his tribe. They glared venomously at the Hooligans as they scrambled offshore, onto Alvin's boats.

As I watched them sail across the water, turned black from midnight, I turned to the bleeding and barely conscious boy in my arms.

#### 4. Waiting Part 1

Untold

#### Chapter 4 - Waiting Part 1

Summary: "He should be alright," Gobber whispered, "butâ€|that leg has got to come off."

\*\*A/N: This is basically an arc. So, yeah :D you might get part 2 soon, maybe not, I don't know. I was really bored tonight and I didn't want to work on Gift or Curse? because...I guess I was just in a TBLTWYLM kinda mood tonight xP \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup's blood dripped down onto my shirt as I staggered in the door, clutching him to me. I looked around the tiny room and I realized there was nowhere to put him. The instant I thought this, Gobber appeared, leading a trail of villagers, all curiously trying to get a glimpse of the boy in my arms.<p>

I hugged him closer to me, trying to block their view. They shouldn't see him like this. I glanced up at Gobber, who was staring vacantly at Hiccup, chewing his lower lip in thought.

"What are we going to do?" one of the women whispered, staring fearfully at Hiccup. I brought my arm up to his head and gently smoothed down his hair. Even in his unconscious state, he moved closer to my touch.

I was asking myself the same question, but I remembered that a chief feels no pain and shows no fear. "There's a spare bedroom," I managed. "Go up thereâ€|and get the bedâ€|"

Gobber nodded. There was a second of silence.

"WELL?!" Gobber bellowed. "WHAT ARE WE ALL STANDING AROUND FOR, THEN? COME UP AND HELP ME!"

Gobber and Hoark dashed upstairs and I tightened my hold on Hiccup. I knew I should have been up there helping them, but I didn't want to let Hiccup go, not for one second.

Gobber reemerged, carrying one side of the bed and Hoark did, too, carrying the other side. "Alright," Gobber groaned, setting it down. He wheezed slightly and stretched his back as he and Hoark stepped away from it.

I didn't want to let him go. I met Gobber's eyes as I slowly set him down on the bed, smoothing out his hair, taking my hands slowly out from under him and turning my attention to his leg.

"Alright," I whispered. "We're gonna need the healer."

I squeezed Hiccup's hand.

"I'll go," Helga volunteered quietly; she hadn't spoken since she'd walked in the house. She crossed the room and pushed the door open slowly. "I'll be back." she seemed quiet, serious — so unlike her usual cheerful self.

Gobber turned back to Hiccup, worry etched into every line of his face. "Stoick," he whispered as I knelt beside the bed, "I don't think the healer can help us."

I didn't ask him what he meant; I thought I already knew. I wondered if fate could really be so cruel as to take the boy away from me before I ever really knew him. Would fate steal him from me before I even got to make things right, or tell him he was my son? I rubbed soothing circles on the back of Hiccup's hand with my thumb. I'd seen him pull through before. He could do it again, couldn't he?

The door flew open then and Helga stormed in, leading Gothi, the village healer. Gothi held her staff tight as she limped slowly over to where Hiccup lay, refusing all offers of help. When she finally made it over there, she looked down at him for a long second before taking her staff and banging it once upon the ground.

The bright, clear sound of her staff hitting the floor rang in my ears and for some reason I had a feeling that that was a bad sign.

Gobber's face tightened. "I thought that might be it."

"What might be it?" I bolted up from my kneeling position frantically.

"Stoick—" Gobber raised a tired face to mine. Before speaking, however, he turned to the other villagers. "Go home," he encouraged. "Go home and rest. This won't be the last time Alvin attacks. And next time, we should be prepared. Go rest. All of you," he added sharply, for a few people seemed willing to linger.

Hoark muttered his way out the door and Helga cast a worried look at Hiccup before walking out, too. When the door had at last slammed shut on the last one, I knew then that Gobber had done that for me. That he had done that in case the healer's news broke me.

I stared at Hiccup hopelessly.

"He should be alright," Gobber whispered, "but that leg has got to come off."

"What?" The word fell from my lips effortlessly, but afterward, every breath seemed hard. How could this be happening? This wasn't fair! I pressed my lips together at the injustice of it all and to keep myself from yelling. Why did this have to happen? He had been through hell and back these past few weeks and I bet the last thing he expected was to wake up with only half a left leg.

Why did Alvin have to take something else from him? Why did he have to take anything from Hiccup at all?

I remembered the way Savage had held Hiccup by the hair, sword at his

throat and the way Alvin had sneered at him and taunted him, like he wasn't like he wasn't even there. Like he was less than, somehow.

"Stoick." Gobber's voice was gentle. "It's the only choice he has."

I considered the wisdom of choosing to do this to say yes and not just to the prosthetic. I would be saying yes, welcoming him to a home on Berk, offering him a family and a home with me, apologizing for all the ways I had wronged him last night

If I hadn't questioned whether or not it was wise to put my whole island at risk for a boy, I would have been a terrible chief. But, if I hadn't questioned whether or not I could live with myself without at least trying to make things right with him, I wouldn't have been a father.

"Alright." I whispered.

## 5. Waiting Part 2

Untold

Chapter 5 - Waiting Part 2

Summary: The continuation of the 'Waiting' arc.

\*\*A/N: So, this is an untold part of To Be Loved the Way You Love Me, as Hiccup never remembered this later on (and even if he did, I'm lazy as heck).\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>You'd never look at Gothi and think she could still impressively wield an axe, but the hilt remained strong and steady in her arms as she approached Hiccup. I couldn't watch. I couldn't watch her do this. I wanted to hide my face, but I knew I had to be strong. I squeezed Hiccup's hand slightly. I hoped it wouldn't hurt him.<p>

Gobber looked a hundred years old as he watched the village healer slowly approach Hiccup, the axe raising high, high in the air, and coming back down again, beginning to finish the job the Outcasts had started. I could feel tears pricking at the corners of my eyes as I watched Hiccup's expressionless face gain a slightly pained frown; the day had been too long for all of us and the sight of my boy in pain was just the icing on the cake.

I tried to push the tears back.

Hiccup stayed still and quiet for several long moments and I began to hope that he wouldn't wake at all.

"My leg," he mumbled softly. "My leg."

He reached downward, feeling around for the stump and I could hear the whimper of pain in his voice.



I walked forward, trying to smooth down his hair, to soothe him, but he refused to be soothed. "My leg," he protested quietly, but a little louder than before. "M-my leg."

"I know." I whispered.

He groaned. "It hurts."

"I know."

"Make it go away. I'm too tired to deal with this."

"It's only gonna hurt for a little longer," I promised him quietly. "Just lie still and quiet until it can be done."

"It \_hurts\_."

"You have to lie still." I instructed him softly.

"My leg feels like it's on fire," he informed me, blinking open large, sleepy green eyes. He didn't flinch away from me or show any sign that I had hurt him, so I assumed he wasn't completely in his head. "How can I be expected to lieâ€"

\_Swish.\_

He screamed and sat straight up, reaching for his leg and screaming still, maybe words or maybe nonsense, I don't know.

"Stoick, get him back down!" Gobber cried angrily. "Gothi could've hurt him!"

'Like she's not already?' I wanted to ask, but I bit my tongue as I gently placed a hand on Hiccup's shoulder, removing his hands from his leg. "Hiccup, Hiccup, Hiccup, it's okayâ€|"

"It hurts," he whispered, his voice breaking like a child's. I could feel sobs catching in my own throat when I heard them in his.

I took his hand, letting it rest in mine. "Squeeze my hand when it starts to hurt," I whispered.

His small hand was shaking in mine.

"You have to lay back down," I told him gently, swiping a few strands of hair off his forehead; his head was sweaty and hot. "Otherwise we can't make you well again."

"Don't let them hurt me." he squeezed my hand. "Don't let them, okay?"

"No, never," I whispered, easing him back down onto the bed. "You're going to be alright."

"Is it gonna hurt?"

"Maybe," I admitted. "But I'm right here."

Untold

## Chapter 6 - Waiting Part 3

Summary: A conclusion to 'Waiting'.

**\*\*A/N:** Well, here's the last part in the 'Waiting' arc. Next chapter will be chapter 39 from Stoick's POV. I also have plot bunnies from Starlight Star Bright that I desperately want to use, so I'm gonna have to wrap up the 'TBLTWYLM from Stoick's POV' thing soon. Ok?  
**\*\***

\* \* \*

><p><em>Begging me to stop, with tears coursing down his cheeks. He screamed at me that his leg was on fire.<em>

\_I looked down and flames were shooting up the leg of his pants while Gobber raised an axe above his head...\_

\_I rushed to Hiccup's defense, trying to stop Gobber, who somehow morphed into Alvin halfway through.\_

\_"What are you doing, Stoick?" Alvin snarled at me. \_

\_"Leave him alone," I was breathing fast, but the tremble in my voice was from rage, not fear. \_

\_"I'm surprised at you," Alvin smirked. "I'm only finishing your work." He gestured to my hands and then the boy on the ground and, in a frenzy of horror, I realized my hands were stained with blood and the sword hilt that protruded from his chest was mine.\_

\_I gasped with the shock of it, backing away a couple of steps. "No."  
\_

\_"Yes," Alvin confirmed tragically. "It's all your fault!" And then he charged forward with the axe again and I found I did not have the strength to stop him.\_

\_I saw a crowd of villagers Outcasts and Hooligans alike, all shouting seemingly random things to Alvin at the top of their lungs.  
\_

\_I looked down at Hiccup worriedly, seeing his leg bleeding fiercely, the boy's cold fingers clutching weakly at his injured stump.  
\_

\_Hiccup looked up at me with tears streaming down his cheeks. "HOW COULD YOU?!" \_

I awoke with a start and glanced around the room, taking a deep breath. Hiccup was in bed, safe, calm, asleep. I gently smoothed down his hair. It had been hours since his leg had come off. He was sound asleep now, but I didn't think I would ever forget having to hold him down while he screamed himself hoarseâ€|

I hadn't wanted to. I had never wanted to. The last thing I wanted to do was stand by while somebody else caused him pain â€" but I knew it

had to be done.

I brushed his hair back from his eyes, looking down at his pale, freckled face. This face had become so familiar to me these last few weeks â€" always smiling, laughing, or talking animatedly about dragons and things, things he was educated about and I was not. I grew used to seeing him across from me at my table and in the forge whenever I visited. He had looked so much like Val it hurt â€" I had tried to be harsh with him for a few weeks, to hide how drawn I was to him, how fascinated I was by the idea that this boy could be a shard of my wife.

I glanced down and spotted a few scars peeking out from underneath his sleeve; it must've gotten rolled up while we were amputating his leg.

I had seen these scars before, when I'd rolled up his sleeve, when I'd cut his armâ€"my mind instantly recoiled from that, not allowing me to go any farther. I knew if I did, the guilt would destroy me.

And sure enough, the scar that was freshest, still scabbing over, still in the act of scarring, was the word 'traitor' spelled out in Norse runes. I felt suddenly sick as I realized my scar wasn't even going to stick out to him. It was all the same to him. I was just one more person who had hurt himâ€"but unlike the others who had, I thought to myself as I studied his scars, oddly fascinated by them, I hadn't enjoyed one second of it. It didn't make me any better of a person than the other people, but those seemed to have enjoyed it; the greedy pleasure spoke clearly just from the old, already healed wounds.

I wondered if the wounds would ever heal, if, when he grew older, they'd eventually grow so faded and healed, nobody could ever tell they'd ever been there. I desperately wanted that to be true. I didn't want to have him walk around with the brand of a traitor forever. I ran my thumb across the scar, tracing the letters with my thumb, wondering what Hiccup would say or do or think when he woke up. Wondering if he'd give me a chance to apologize or not.

He had to at least give me that. I had to tell him how sorry I was. Even if he never wanted to see me again, he had to at least let me apologize. I had wronged him so terribly, but didn't I at least deserve a chance to make things right?

No, I admitted to myself wearily. No, I probably didn't.

I glanced down at the scars again, feeling a scowl twist my face. I had wronged him, yes, I had been terrible. I had failed him so much. I was failing as a father and falling apart as a chief. I desperately wanted to make things right, but I didn't even know what "right" was anymore. The only thing I knew was that I hoped that that scar was the only one he ever got from me.

## 7. Forgiven

Untold

Chapter 7 - Forgiven

Summary: Chapter 39 from Stoick's POV.

\*\*A/N: So named because I could just hear 'Forgiven' by Within Temptation playing in the background. What do you guys think?  
:D\*\*

\*\*Also, I'm thinking I might just do away with this whole story and keep the content for a TBLTWYLM thing from Stoick's POV. Just...the entire story. From Stoick's POV. What do you think? Well, I could, but then I'd have to write \*hiss\* action! Also seeing as chapter one was my very first venture into Stoick's mind, I don't know how good I'd be at it and how in-character I would keep him. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>The house had been quiet for weeks. I wasn't even afraid of waking Hiccup anymore, because it was clear he was sleeping like the dead.<p>

I flung open the door and walked inside, my eyes meeting an odd scene: Hiccup was sprawled out in front of Toothless on the floor, one hand weakly massaging his leg. He was glaring at Toothless, the other arm trying madly to push against the dragon. Hiccup saw me and a kind of gasp ripped its way out of his mouth.

He tried to stand, but he only ended up staggering backward, whimpering at the pain in his leg. I crossed the room easily in two strides, putting one hand on his chest, helped along by Toothless. I threw the dragon a grateful look. He hadn't exactly been my biggest fan since everything that had gone down with Hiccup, but ever since I had very calmly told him I had no wish to harm Hiccup, and proved it to him by many long nights at Hiccup's bedside, he had been milder.

"Easy, son." I turned my attention to the injured boy on the bed. I smoothed down his hair with one hand, using the other to gently coax him back on the bed. "You've been through a lot and you need rest."

"Uh..." he groaned softly, his eyelids fluttering sleepily. I had to admire his stubbornness - he wasn't going down without a fight. As horrible as I knew it was, to be smiling while he was pained and confused, a sort of proud smile flashed across my face.

"Shh, shh." I coaxed gently. "Go back to sleep."

"No!" Every movement must've been hard; he moved slowly and tiredly as he ripped off the blanket and threw it off his legs. He swung his legs over the side of the bed, frantically trying to push himself up. His hands were shaking with the effort it took to support his weight and I put a hand over his tiny, trembling one. He wasn't completely in his head, I reminded myself. I just needed to be gentle.

"Easy." I repeated quietly.

"Uh-uh." He shook his head, but allowed me to lay him back down on the bed.

"Hiccup, you're alright." I whispered. Wrong. He'd lost half a leg.

How could he ever be okay?

He muttered something barely audible and I had to ask him to repeat himself.

"Toothless." He lifted pleading green eyes to me. "Will you look after him? Please?"

"We have been," I assured him. "What, you think just because you've been asleep for a few days means we're gonna let him starve?"

"Days?" He looked so forlorn, I instantly regretted telling him. "Then..." he mumbled; his eyebrows drew together as he absently studied the bed, tracing a finger over the top. "Why?"

"Why what?"

"Why...?" He couldn't seem to find the words. There was a sheen of sweat on his forehead and he was breathing heavily.

There was a long silence, so long I assumed he had fallen asleep. His head was bent down, I couldn't see his face, but it made sense; he had been fighting to stay awake ever since he opened his eyes.

"Hiccup..." I began, sure my voice was going to break. I reached out a shaking hand for Hiccup's. He stared at my hand, glanced up at Toothless and then let me take his hand.

"Hiccup-" I tried again, but he pulled his hand away before I could finish. Of course. I let my hand drop. He didn't trust me. Who would, after the kind of hell I had put him through?

I felt my heart squeeze. I wanted him to trust me. I needed him to know I was sorry. "Hiccup," I whispered, "I'm sorry."

"Oh." He stared at his feet. There was a second of silence, and then he spoke again, in a shaking voice. "W-why?"

"For..." I couldn't look him in the eye when I replied; how could I have hurt this boy, this innocent little child? "For...what I said...what I did..."

"No," he interrupted before I could finish, although I had nothing to say. "I mean, why? Why are you sorry for everything?"

"Because...because I almost killed you," I said, and this time I looked him right in the eye. His expression told me I was despicable and I was. I deserved to feel that way. "I almost lost you. I almost lost my son." My words came out so quietly, I was sure he hadn't heard.

I slowly, tentatively reached out, wrapping him in a hug. All I wanted to do was hold him, be near to him, take all his pain away. "I hope you can forgive me, son." I whispered.

He pushed against me, staring me down with suspicion in his gaze. "Why? Why do you keep saying that? You call me son. I'm not your

son."

"But you are." I told him quietly. I waited for him to nod and say, ah, yes, yes of course. But his response was one that made me want to laugh and say, oh, never mind, just a dream.

"You said I wasn't."

The guilt rushed through me, threatening to crush me under its weight. "I'm sorry."

"You branded me," he whispered; his breathing was becoming shallow and quick, and I wondered worriedly whether he was having a panic attack.

"You branded me a traitor and you told me I wasn't your son." He didn't sound hurt; just angry and guarded. Had I surprised him at all with my actions, or had he been expecting this from day one?

"Will you please just tell me why you're acting like nothing's changed?" The panic attack breathing was growing louder as he neared the end of his sentence, looking up at me and awaiting my reply.

"It has." I nodded, resting a hand on his cheek. I tried not to be hurt when he drew away. "And I am so sorry with what I put you through." The apology was going to be easiest; I truly was sorry, but I wasn't sure how much to tell him anymore. Gobber had insisted I owed him an explanation, at the very least, and I couldn't argue with that. "But you are my son."

"No, I'm not," he insisted, conviction clear in his voice. "Alvin-

I put a finger on his lips. I understood why he wanted to speak, but I had to say this.

"Told me that you are mine."

"What?" He demanded drowsily, brow knitting.

"My son." I said again. "He called you your boy. And before that, he said you were my son. Later, he made a few vague hints that he was telling the truth, but you wouldn't have heard that. You were unconscious then."

"I was?" By the way his eyes widened, you would've thought I had just shared a national secret with him. His eyes narrowed again, brow knitting, lips pinching. I recognized it as the face he made when he was thinking.

As the film of memory passed over his eyes for a brief moment, I found myself wondering if he would remember anything from the battle...or after.

I hesitated. I had never been speechless before, I had never not known what to say. Funny how only he was able to render me this way.

He came back to earth suddenly, his narrowed green eyes going back to their familiar almond shape. "But, I mean, I still have to leave."

"Why?" The word slipped out before I could remind myself that he didn't have to explain anything to me.

"I'm an Outcast." He said. "You don't want an Outcast on your shores do you?"

Technically, he was a Hooligan and I thought about telling him as much before I realized he still looked a little confused, a little wrong-footed. It wasn't the best idea to bombard him with facts so soon after he had woken. He needed rest.

"You're the exception," I decided instead, resting a hand on his shoulder.

"Only because I'm your son." His face lost the confused look, transforming suddenly to something like bitterness. "And, for that matter, I don't care that I'm your blood son." He shrugged my hand off his shoulder.

I let my hand drop back into my lap. That stung. A lot.

"Just because I am, it makes it okay for me to stay on Berk?" His hands were clenched into fists, his teeth gritted. "What about if you found out one of the other Outcasts was your blood son? That would make it okay for them, too?" He stared me down, waiting for my answer.

His fierceness was so surprising that it took me a second to remember exactly what I had been going to say to him. "It's not about blood, Hiccup," I explained gently. "It was about you. You offered to give up your whole life for the sake of Berk."

The memory of him standing in front of Alvin, bravely insulting the man, never betraying a hint of fear in his face, sent a flash of pride running through me. I smiled a little, not even sure what I wanted him to say.

"Yeah," he mumbled, but it was clear from his quiet tone that I had embarrassed him. "But that's just because...Berk..." I could see the tips of his ears turning red. "...That's got nothing to do with..."

"Blood or not," I interrupted gently, knowing he was about to offer me several thousand protests. "I love you."

I hesitated this time before pulling him into my arms, prepared to feel him struggling, prepared to release him at a moment's notice.

He didn't hug me back, but he didn't pull away, either.

"I...r-really?" The confusion mixed with pain and what sounded like hope hit me hard. It sounded as though nobody had ever told him they loved him.

When he realized what he'd said, he tried again. "I mean, um...cool, nice-" as if he didn't know what to say back.

"Yes." I interrupted quietly.

He fell silent in my arms.

## 8. The Hardest Part

Untold

### Chapter 8 - The Hardest Part

Summary: "I think it would be best if I left Berk."

\*\*A/N: Continuing with the theme of Stoick's POV, I've got this :D it was quite fun to write, but I've got more from Stoick's POV coming - more untold parts of TBLTWYLM, things that happened while Hiccup wasn't there or unconscious and stuff. Yeah. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>After a few more seconds of silence, he pulled away from me, not quite meeting my gaze. He was sitting rigidly, his hands clasped into tight fists - not trusting me.<p>

The hot flash of guilt that came with this realization was enough to send my smile tumbling off my face. Of course he didn't trust me.

Last time he had, I had tried to kill him. I slowly slid him off my lap and onto the bed,

suddenly intensely aware of just how very small he felt in my arms, how small and vulnerable.

"Right," I whispered once he'd gotten settled. This was the one part I'd rehearsed that I didn't want to say, the part I wanted to cut out of the script. I wanted to let the curtain fall without these words being said, but I knew that was not going to happen. Life was not a book and there were no happy endings to it, no well-written, tearful hugs as he told me he loved me back, that he forgave me.

"I understand why you wouldn't want to live on Berk after...after everything that's happened. But, I should like you to know, should you choose to stay, you would always have a home here." I wanted to impress upon him just what I meant; how he'd always have somewhere to run to when he was cold or tired or injured. When he was lonely or upset or angry or tearful, when he was afraid or not, he could always come running right back to me.

"Um...sir..." he was looking uncomfortable now, blushing as he fiddled with the blanket.

I didn't miss the way he'd reverted back to calling me that. It sounded unfamiliar and foreign on his tongue.

"I think it would be best if I left Berk."

Of course. He didn't trust me. After what I had put him through, could he ever trust me again? If he could, would I deserve it?

"I understand." I whispered. I had to let him go. I had to remind myself that he was sixteen, not five. He could make his own



decisions. I just had to stand back and accept them.

"That's not what I meant, sir," Hiccup added hastily. "I only meant...Alvin...you guys, you shouldn't have to deal with him while he's looking for me..."

A tiny bit of hope entered my chest. Was that it? Was that why he didn't want to stay? Did it have nothing to do with trust and everything to do with the fact that he didn't want to endanger us? When I realized I was simply gazing hopefully at him, I tried to rectify my mistake; he needed to know that he'd be safe here. "Hiccup...you're...if you want to be," I said hastily, "...then you're one of us now. That means we look out for each other.

It's our job. And whether or not you know it, it's what we'd do for each other anyway, Hiccup."

"You'd be willing?" He whispered. "You'd be willing to put your whole island at risk for some stupid-"

"Hiccup," I began warningly, trying to convey that I didn't want to hear him put himself down.

"-Kid?" He finished. "I thank you for the offer, but it's not your job to protect me, Stoick."

Wrong. It was my job. I was his father. He was my son. I should protect him. I should be able to. Why was I never able to?

"It's not anyone's job, except mine."

It shouldn't have been his. That's what I wanted to say. He shouldn't have to look out for himself.

Toothless gave an unhappy noise, capturing our attention. When he turned to him, he was glaring at Hiccup.

"Fine," Hiccup said, a smile threatening at the corners of his lips. "Toothless considers it his job, too."

This was so hard. I wanted more than anything to pull him into a hug and tell him I was his protector, his defender. He didn't need to look out for himself anymore. But I understood the independence in his gaze. I had lost him when he was only a baby, and he wasn't one anymore. I just had to remember that.

"If you ever do decide you need a place then," I insisted. He had to know Berk was always open to him as his refuge. "Then just know that you always have a home here, on Berk. Always."

He nodded slowly, but offered me no other replies.

I had gotten the hardest part over with. So why did it feel like what was to come was going to be even worse?

## 9. The Magic Word

Untold

## Chapter 9 - The Magic Word

Summary: Hiccup doesn't know a lot about how things run on Berk, and it starts to get to him.

**\*\*A/N:** Ok. So. So. So. This is a slight break in the TBLTWYLM from Stoick's POV. This is the kind of stuff you can expect me to post after that is finished. You may make your decision about wanting to continue this story now XD\*\*

**\*\*Furthermore,** I guess this idea occurred to me because I was thinking one night about how much I really, really wanted Hiccup/Stoick fluff. I thought about this idea for a long time and kept continually dismissing it as too fluffy for this fic, not enough substance, not enough angst, etc. etc. **\*\***

**\*\*Finally,** I decided to try my hand at writing it last night. Three versions later, here it is :) **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>The early morning dew glistened in patches on the grass, the sky was turning pale purple and blue in preparation of the sunrise and I was trying to get up the biggest hill in Raven's Point Forest to watch it rise.<p>

Stoick was the chief of Berk, meaning he rarely had time to do anything with me, and that was okay â€" but some days, he'd wake me early so we could watch the sunrise together.

This was one of those days.

So there I was, trying to get up the hill, but it had rained the night before, so things were still a bit wet. I went sliding all the way back down to the bottom, landing in a puddle of leftover rainwater.

The splash from my fall, coupled with the slight yelp I'd given when I slipped, had Stoick looking back at me. He gave a sigh, an affectionate smile making its way onto his face as he shook his head. He walked easily back down the hill, taking me by the hand and lifting me up out of the grass. "C'mon."

"I'm just going to fall back down," I informed him, taking to my feet again and starting up the hill.

>"I'll walk with you, then, and if you fall, I'll catch you," he replied simply, one hand on my back, gently guiding me forward.<p>

"Thanks," I panted, when I'd made it to the top of the hill, and he'd stopped me falling twice.

"No problem." he replied softly as the first few rays of morning sun began peeking over the tops of the trees.

"Look!" I pointed to the sky, turning my attention to it instead. I edged a little farther forward to see the sun better, smiling into the early morning breeze that played with my hair.

As the light spilled out across the sky, I felt like saying or doing

something " thanking Stoick for doing this with me, for wanting to spend time with me. But the words stuck in my throat and I found I couldn't think of how to say it without sounding like a complete idiot.

I turned to him as the sun shone down on us, still too early for it to dry up the dew on the ground.

"We'd better get back to the village," Stoick said softly, one hand on my back. "Everybody else will be waking up soon, and then the day will start."

Due to the constant hustle and bustle of the village, these walks were the only times I remembered what peace was like; I reluctantly fell into step beside Stoick, walking down the hill again.

Halfway back to the village, I went skidding due to a leftover puddle and (lucky me) ended up tripping and falling into a patch of ferns.

"Hiccup?" Stoick called, easily jumping over the puddle and looking down at me in the patch. "Are you alright?"

"Yeah, I'm fine," I replied. The ferns had cushioned my fall.

I tried to sit up, but the plants were still springy from last night's rain, and they didn't want to let me go. I ended up falling back, my body cushioned by the ferns. I tried to get out several more times, and the only thing I succeeded in doing was looking like a complete fool.

I could hear the village whispering even now: \_"Chief's son bested by a plant, did you hear?" \_

Stoick chuckled slightly, shaking his head a bit. "I've got an idea," he said, stepping neatly over to me. "Why don't I hold the leaves still while you jump out?" he suggested, putting his hands gently on the bed of ferns.

"That's a good idea," I replied gratefully. I reached down to straighten my shirt; it had come up slightly while I struggled against the ferns. Stoick pressed down on a branch at the same time, and, as a result, a couple of the leaves pressed against my side, tickling my skin.

I chuckled lightly, trying to bat it away. "Stop."

"What's wrong?" he frowned, letting me know he hadn't done it on purpose.

"Never mind," I shrugged. "A couple of leaves just tickled me, that was all."

"Oh." he nodded, reaching down to hold the bed still again, but an odd expression overtook his face, almost like an evil grin.

"\_Oh.\_"

"What?" I demanded.

He grabbed up a nearby fern from the bed beneath me and held it up,

reaching for me with it.

I thought I knew what he was doing, but unfortunately, it only clicked in my brain a few seconds after he got a good hold of me. My shirt was still up slightly, so he waved the fern along my side, causing me to shriek in laughter and try to get out of reach of the fern, but I was trapped in the bed of plants.

Grinning, Stoick let the fern go farther, onto my stomach now instead of my side.

\_ 'Chief's son really bested by a plant' \_ I thought to myself.

"St-stop!" I pleaded through my chuckles.

"I never knew you were this ticklish," he teased.

I made a clumsy grab for the fern, but in my weakened state from all the laughter, I only just got a hold of it before Stoick yanked it out of my grip.

He waved it over my side and I swatted at it, laughing madly now. I let go of the last of my dignity and began begging for mercy. "Come on!" I laughed. "Stop it!"

"What's the magic word?" Stoick waved the fern over my stomach for what I sincerely hoped would be the last time.

"Iâ€¦I d-don't know!" I choked, trying desperately to squirm away. "St-stop, just st-stop!"

"What do you mean, you don't know?" Stoick stopped tickling me, but he still held the fern rather threateningly, like he planned on doing it again soon.

"I don't know theâ€¦the magic word," I gasped, taking a couple deep breaths.

"Whâ€¦" he seemed a bit dumbfounded. "Youâ€¦you've never heard anyone say, 'what's the magic word'?"

"No," I sat up in the bed of ferns before they shoved me hopelessly back down.

"Oh!" Stoick released the fern, letting it fall at his feet; I only really breathed a sigh of relief when he put it down. "Let me help you."

He held it still while I clambered out, and I dusted myself off, unsure whether he was going to resume tickling me the moment I got out, asking me for magic words I didn't know, or if I was officially safe.

"So, you haven't ever heard anybody say, 'what's the magic word?'" Stoick asked again.

"No!" I repeated. "Whatâ€¦what is it supposed to be anyway?"

"The magic word, it's supposed to be 'please'. So, if you ever ask

anybody to do something " or in this case, shout it at them " then they'll ask for the magic word. It's something to remind children to mind their manners " it's more memorable and often adds more fun to the game for the child than to remind them sternly."

"Oh." I flushed suddenly, looking down at the ground. "I've never had that before."

"Hey, there's nothing wrong with that," he insisted, tilting my chin upward so I was forced to look at him. I wanted to look away from him so badly; how was it that I was suddenly very conscious of all the years with Alvin, when I would forget my place and he wouldn't use the magic word game to remind me, but instead a cuff on the head?

I pulled my face out of his grasp, looking at the ground. My mind flitted suddenly to the childhood I had lost, thanks to Alvin. If I had been here, on Berk, instead of with Alvin, things would have wound up so different. I would have grown up with Stoick; I would have known my real mother. I would have known what to say when he asked me for the magic word. I scuffed the toe of my boot against the wet grass. "uh"

"Hiccup"

"It makes me feel like an idiot," I blurted. "Because there are so many little things about Berk, about life here, that I should know, that I would have known! And it's so frustrating, because I want to know them, I want to know everything about this place and next to nothing about Outcast Island and the thing is, I can't ever have it that way! I can't ever be who I would have been had I grown up here. I don't know how anything here works " I'm still marveling at the fact that you want me, that you love me. It's so stupid, so stupid! That a stupid little game that parents play with their children should set me off, but" I ran out of words, taking a deep, shuddering breath, trying my hardest to pretend nothing was happening. I didn't know where the sudden outburst had come from, or why it had come " all I knew was I wanted it to have never happened.

"Hiccup" Stoick knelt down so we were eye level. "I know that you don't want to remember Outcast Island," he began gently. "And I know you want to lead a normal life. And the thing is, I would give everything for that " for you to have grown up here, for you to be happy, for you to feel wanted. I know we can't have it that way, Hiccup, but the thing is " you don't have to feel stupid. You're not an idiot for not knowing one simple thing. You might not know how things work here, but I promise " I promise that I will show you. I will show you how things work here and I will spend every second of the rest of my life showing you that I love you, that it's not some sort of shocking miracle. I'm supposed to. It's what a father is supposed to do for his son, is to love him, to be there for him."

"Is that why you're doing it, then?" I whispered. "Because you have to?"

"No," he replied softly. He grabbed me and pulled me into a tight hug. "I do it because I do care about you, whether or not I should. I

love you and I have since before I even knew you were my son. I love you, Hiccup, and I promise I will prove it to you."

I sank to my knees in his arms, feeling the same warmth bloom in my chest, the warmth that came whenever he treated me like this, with love, with affection. I clung to him tightly as he rubbed gentle, soothing circles in my back.

"Are you okay?" he whispered after awhile. "Do you feel better?"

I swiped at the tears that had been trying to build in my eyes for the last ten minutes. "Thank you, Dad. Justâ€¦thank you. For everything."

"Don't thank me." he insisted quietly. "It's what I'm supposed to do for you, remember? I'm doing my job for you, Hiccup."

I pulled away from him and smiled gratefully.

He gave me a quick kiss on the forehead and smiled mischievously, grabbing up the fern again. "Now, let's see if you know that magic wordâ€¦"

## 10. Afraid

Untold

### Chapter 10 - Afraid

Summary: It hit me, then, that people weren't naturally afraid of that.

\*\*A/N: Ok. This chapter is dedicated to RazzlePazzleDooDot for her 1. amazing drawings for TBLTWYLM and other fics, 2. for her complete inability to see the flaws in my stories no matter what and 3. just because this was one of her favorite chapters of the story and I thought she might like a little gift :) \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"So, that was some temperature in the forge today, huh?" chuckled Gobber lightly.<p>

"I thought for sure winter had come," Hiccup replied with a light laugh of his own.

"No, not yet, lad," Gobber told him, shaking his head. "But it will. Soon. It always starts like this." he looked out the window with a little sigh. "Which means you'll have to get a move on."

My friend's words suddenly made me realize that Hiccup wasn't going to be here forever â€" just until he finished his riding vest. He'd become such a part of daily life on Berk, such a natural part of the forge, that it was almost impossible to tell myself that, once upon a time, there had been a Berk without a Hiccup.

The idea seemed strange to me now, but I knew I would get used to it.

"What?" Hiccup sounded surprised.

"You don't ever want to leave Berk in winter," Gobber told him, a twinkle of amusement in his gaze. "You're pretty much guaranteed frostbite." he caught my eye and I nodded in agreement.

"'Course," Gobber added, "you're pretty much guaranteed frostbite anywhere on this island during winter." he shrugged.

I watched Hiccup closely, thinking maybe he'd give a sign that he wanted to stay, or maybe he'd request to stay until springâ€|

I tried to banish the thoughts; he wasn't staying until spring, or even Snoggletog. He was leaving soon, very soon. I wasn't ever going to see him again after this. But couldn't I enjoy the fantasy that he would be here forever, even if I only got to for a little while?

Hiccup grinned, taking a bite of bread. "I'll be sure to get the vest finished before the next snowfall."

"If the first snowfall comes before the vest gets finished, you'll stay here, of course?" I put in, making sure to make it a question and not a declaration; it sounded so silly, but I didn't want him to know I wanted him to stay.

"Ohâ€|uhâ€|um, I guess?" he raised an eyebrow, shrugging. "Unless I want to freeze to death, and that's definitely not on my to-do list."

I smiled slightly at his joke, and Gobber chuckled.

I reached over to put a hand on his shoulder, to get and hold his attention. It seemed that sometimes, when I tried my hardest to show him kindness, he regarded the whole thing as one big joke.

When he saw my hand coming, everything seemed to slow down for a couple seconds. His expression transformed suddenly from one of amusement to fear. There was no other word for it; it wasn't terror, or panic, it was just fear, plain and simple.

He dropped his fork, and it clattered loudly against his plate. He flinched back, like he expected a strike, dropping his face. His bangs fell in front of his eyes, shielding his expression from view, but I knew that, under the hair, he was still scared of me.

I looked down at my hand, hovering in midair, inches from his shoulder. When had I ever given him reason to be afraid of me? When had any adult, ever, given him reason to fear? Had they? I looked up at him, waiting for his response.

He didn't say any words; he lifted his head slightly, peeking up at me fearfully, clearly still waiting for the blow. The rush of pity I felt for him in that moment surprised me; pity and something else, something I couldn't quite define. Did I want to define it, even?

"Hiccup?" I whispered softly. Everything about me was soft in that moment. I was so used to being a stern chief of Berk that I had forgotten that there were still things out there that made me soft

â€" and frightened children had always, always been one of them. "Is there anything wrong?"

Of course there is, you idiot! I chastised myself.

Hiccup shook his head, but he wouldn't look me in the eye; one hand was resting on the table and when I looked down at it, I saw it was shaking.

He shook his head again â€" I don't think he was even aware of how badly he was trembling.

I wanted to say something to break the silence, because I was sure he wouldn't; how had he gone from laughing and joking two minutes earlier to this quiet, submissive boy in front of me? He was actually shrinking down in his seat, trying to appear smaller, trying to make it easier for me to strike him if I wanted. If that was what he expected, of course, and that appeared to be it.

"You flinched," I told him quietly, although I was sure he knew this already.

He shook his head again, but I caught sight of him through his shifting bangs and I saw his lips were shaking almost as badly as his hands.

I wanted to press it; I let so much go with him, even when I knew he was lying. Even when I knew it, I let it slide. I didn't want to let this slide. I never wanted him to be afraid of me. I wanted to make it plain that he had nothing to fear from me. I was never going to lay a hand on the boy in front of me. I would sooner die.

The realization should've confused me, the fact that I was willing to die for a boy I hardly knew. And yet, I knew it was true. The emotion that I couldn't define, the one that came along with the pity â€" it had been affection. Love. Protectiveness. The need to protect. The desire to protect him, the desire to defend him.

Gobber's chair scraping back pulled me out of my reverie. Looking up, I saw he had pushed his chair back all the way from the table and was standing up to leave. "I'll just examine your lovely carving collection, Stoick," he told me, but when he passed by, his expression said clearly what he meant: \_I think he wants to be alone with you.\_

I waited a few minutes after Gobber had left, sitting there before reaching out a hand for Hiccup, to touch him, to comfort him, let him know I would never hurt him. And then I realized that that was what had upset him so much in the first place. I dropped my hand, letting it hit the table softly. It was a better idea to leave a touch out of the occasion on this one.

"Hiccupâ€|" I began, unsure how to proceed. How exactly do you ask somebody a question like this? I hesitated, wondering if he was going to say something. When it became clear he wasn't, I decided to take the reins again. "You acted like you thought I was going to hit you."

Hiccup looked up at me again, careful, tentative. Afraid.



It hit me then, that people weren't naturally afraid of that. They didn't flinch back from people on a regular basis. Hiccup had been taught to be afraid of that. I felt pity rushing through me again and again, the need to protect, the need to defend. And if that need to defend, if this sudden need to fight for him—if it didn't mean rushing out onto the battlefield with sword and shield, if it instead meant sitting here in the quietness and assuring him I would never hurt him—if that's what fighting for him meant, too—then I was willing to do that, too.

"Uh—well—it's nothing, sir." His voice was quiet, soft—afraid. Again. "I mean, we are Vikings, after all, right?" His tone was shaking, his voice unsteady. I wondered worriedly if he was going to cry; I was useless at helping people when it came to that.

"Yes." I told him. "But the Peaceables don't practice violence, do they? That's what earned them their name, Peaceables, isn't it?"

Hiccup's gaze faltered; he had been looking at a point around my face, never quite meeting my eye and now it was back on the table. His hands had stopped shaking, but his voice was still unsteady. "Yes, sir."

"Then—" I began, but Hiccup's shaking voice interrupted mine.

"The Peaceable tribe was all about peace," he whispered, "but there were some people in there who weren't so peaceful. I got into fights with them sometimes."

"Sometimes?" I asked, before I could stop myself. "You must be very used to being hit."

What I could see of his face flushed a bright red. "It wasn't always kids my age," he mumbled in a barely audible voice. "Sometimes, it was—" he took a pause before his next words and I sensed the words were an effort. "Adults, sir."

Again, the need to protect, but this time, it came with a sudden understanding of what the phrase "seeing red" meant. The desire to hurt everybody who had ever hurt him was surprising. "Adults?" I spat, nearly shaking with rage.

"What's wrong with that?" he whispered, hardly daring to look up at me.

I hesitated before answering; didn't he understand that people must always, always keep their hands off children? Had he been taught differently? I waited a long minute before answering. It was during one of his fearful glances up at me that I spoke again. I caught his gaze and whispered, "Oh, Hiccup. So much."

## 11. Closer

Untold

Chapter 11 - Closer

Summary: Stoick's POV of chapter 41.

\*\*A/N: Um...here you go. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I glanced down at the boy sleeping on the bed and rubbed my temples tiredly. He had tried to resist all offers of food, drink, help and sleep, but I had pushed him into accepting it anyway. He was stubborn, but so was I.<p>

I ran a hand over his hair, sitting down in the chair beside the bed. I didn't blame him for not trusting me enough. I didn't blame him for wanting to leave. But it still hurt. I took a breath. We had made a deal: he would stay for the duration of tomorrow, to check how he did on his prosthetic leg and catch up on lost sleep and meals.

He had been sleeping for almost a week straight, actually, but the dark circles under his eyes clearly said he was still tired. He looked peaceful in sleep; open, vulnerable, trusting. He held himself so rigidly around me when he was awake; but asleep, he was completely relaxed.

It was nice to see him this way, for once; looking down at him, I could almost fool myself into thinking that this was back before I knew he was an Outcast. I could fool myself into thinking that nothing happened.

I gently put one hand on his cheek, staring down at him as different emotions flooded through me, both right and wrong.

On the one side, there was all the love and affection I had ever felt for anyone, multiplied into thousands; I had never known I could care for somebody this deeply, so deeply.

There was a protective instinct, there, too, something quietly insisting that this boy was mine; he was someone I had to protect, I had to defend. His smile made every day brighter and his tears were as gloomy as rain. And there was a fierce, fierce pride in him, for standing up for himself, for showing no fear towards the enemy, a kind of pride I don't believe I had ever felt.

And then there was the darker side, the confused mix. The strongest was guilt. Everything about him when he was awake - the rigid way he held himself, the tense way he moved and the formal way he spoke - I knew it was built on a deep distrust. All I wanted to do was hold him close and whisper that I was here now; he was okay, and I was never letting him go, never. And then there was anger, an unquenchable rage. Rage towards Alvin, for treating him this way...rage towards myself, for doing the same...and lastly, rage at him, though I knew it made no sense. I loved him with everything in me, and I was feeling that love so strongly now...but I was also feeling the rage so strongly now. It wasn't a desire to harm him physically; he appeared too simply breakable for me to ever think about abusing him and allow the thoughts to continue on. Still, it was rage.

And then, somewhere in between the guilt and the love came sadness. I was going to have to say goodbye to this boy and soon, so very soon. Could I do it? Could I look him in the eye and let him go? Could I willingly release his hand? Did I have the strength, did I have the courage?

Hiccup stirred in his sleep suddenly and I moved my hand off of him until he'd gotten settled.

When he had, he reached out for thin air, fingers grasping at nothing.

I reached for his hand; when his fingers met mine, he settled down, but his grip was almost too strong for me to break. The strength of his small hands surprised me.

He settled onto his side, one hand pillowing his head, the other clutching mine in a death grip. I allowed a small smile to pass over my face at the sight of him, before I thought about Alvin's words, for the first time since Hiccup had woken.

There had been so much to settle today, I'd nearly forgotten about that part, about what he'd said. Even when he'd been telling me, I'd quietly insisted to myself that whatever he said and whatever turned out to be true, I would love the boy anyway.

But looking down at him now, so fragile-looking, so worn, so very little, it was hard to believe anything Alvin had told me about him. When he was awake, with his hard eyes and rigid posture, I could believe anything; but in the quiet darkness of this night, when he looked so vulnerable, so fragile, it was so hard to believe.

Hiccup's eyelids flickered and he took his hand out from underneath his head, reaching up with it to grasp at mine, so both of his unbelievably small hands gripped mine tightly. I could've easily broken free from his grip; he wasn't terribly strong, after all. But I didn't.

I pulled the chair up closer to his bed and sat beside my son, holding his hands all night long.

\* \* \*

><p>I could see the effort it took to hold himself upright by the way his hands shook on the bedpost behind him; but it wasn't like he was ever going to tell anybody about it.<p>

Gobber winced a little as Hiccup readied himself.

Hiccup shakily released the bedpost, taking a slow step forward. He barely made it half an inch before swaying suddenly, a sheen of sweat beginning to coat his forehead from the effort.

I took a step forward instinctively, arms out to stop his fall, but he gritted his teeth and shook his head at me.

His face had turned bright red from the exertion and his hands were clenched into such tight fists that the knuckles had gone white.

Toothless stuck his head out to catch Hiccup as well, and Hiccup relaxed slightly as he allowed himself to lean on the dragon for just a second before regaining his composure and shaking it off.

"Thanks," I heard him mumble breathlessly, taking his hands off the dragon's head. Toothless growled slightly, but his eyes were soft with concern.

"Sorry, bud," Hiccup whispered to him, righting himself, getting ready for another go with the fake leg.

He stood there for a long second, eyes misting over in thought and I worried that maybe he was in pain.

"Hiccup?" I whispered, and he glanced up at me, the film leaving his eyes.

"Yes, sir?"

I bit my tongue against the honest, 'you don't have to call me sir' that lingered there. I knew it would make him feel uncomfortable. "Are you alright?"

He nodded uncertainly, straightening up and getting ready to take another step.

I heard Gobber give a wince again as Hiccup took another step forward. It was so small, I'm not really sure how you could count it as a step, but the pain in Hiccup's eyes was so clear, I knew it was hard for him no matter how small it was.

Another clunking step forward and I saw him flinch, drawing a sharp breath. I winced, too, although I knew I had no right to. I couldn't help it; it was painful just watching it.

A cold blast of wind blew in the room and Hiccup shivered slightly, trying to steady himself enough for another step. I heard Toothless give a small, worried moan in the back of his throat and I turned to him, noticing it had caught Hiccup's attention, too.

"I'll be fine," he whispered to the dragon, even as I quietly marveled at how easily Hiccup spoke with him, like he understood everything.

"Are you sure?" I broke into their conversation, not believing him for one second; the memory of his small flinches and winces was too clear in my mind.

He gave an offended scoff. "Of course."

"You might want to take a break," I warned him. "You don't want to overdo it."

"I haven't even taken three steps since I started," he replied, the offense in his voice even clearer.

"For somebody who's just lost a limb, Hiccup, that COULD be overdoing it," Gobber put in.

Hiccup gave an annoyed sigh. "Look, I'll be fine!"

Toothless sternly shoved him back onto the bed by his nose and Hiccup fell onto his back before pulling himself upright with a wince and

folding his arms, glaring at Toothless like he had personally betrayed him.

Gobber glanced out the window. "It's gonna drop tonight, I'll bet," he muttered resignedly.

Hiccup seemed to have taken Toothless' betrayal fairly well; he was rubbing the dragon's head, smiling down at him, the other hand rubbing his prosthetic. "What will?" He glanced curiously up at Gobber.

"The temperature," Gobber replied with a shrug.

Hiccup's eyes widened. "It's possible for it to drop?"

Gobber chuckled slightly and I couldn't help my own amusement from showing, even though I tried to remind myself it wasn't his fault.

"Yeah, where've you been all winter, Hiccup? Don't you know how cold it gets here?" Gobber asked in between chuckles.

"I've never had a Berk winter," Hiccup tried to defend himself, but his own smile was filled with companionship as he looked at Gobber. "It's a lot warmer on Outcast...I mean, where I come from." The smile dropped off his face and he fidgeted uncomfortably with his sleeve.

He didn't want to say Outcast Island.

I wanted to say something to him. Maybe, 'it's alright to talk about your old home' or something, but I was sure it would only drive him farther away, even though all I wanted was to pull him closer.

Gobber caught my eye and we exchanged glances.

'What do you think?' I asked him silently.

Gobber read my thoughts, the one thing he was so good at doing and replied back without speaking. 'I think he's not a child.'

He was right, of course. I didn't have to drive him away - but he was almost a grown man and the one thing I shouldn't do was try to pull him closer.

## 12. Hypothetical

Untold

### Chapter 12 - Hypothetical

Summary: Hiccup is curious about girls. Maybe Stoick can answer his questions.

**\*\*A/N:** Happy Valentine's Day, people! I hope you enjoy this semi-okay one-shot from a very bored person. But V-Day was fun for me because we baked cupcakes with little bits of red candy in them and gave them pink frosting and red and white heart sprinkles :D how

was you guys' holiday? \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Okay.<p>

The thing was, I really, really did not want to ask Stoick about this. But I didn't particularly want to ask Gobber, either. Actually, I especially didn't want to ask Gobber.

He would get that look that clearly read that he knew this day would come and then he would launch into one of his stories "it might relate to the subject we were talking about, it might not, it all depends.

So, the thing was, the only other option I had was Stoick. The embarrassment factor would be high, but much less so if it was he I asked rather than Gobber. And, hopefully, the conversation would be over quicker.

So I sat down at the table, took a deep breath, focused on being natural and said it all in one breath.

"I'm curious how do you ask out a girl?"

\_Way to be natural, Hiccup. \_

I felt my cheeks beginning to heat as Stoick glanced up from the table and frowned. "What?"

"Iâ€¦I was kind of curious," I tried to slow myself down as I repeated my words. "How do you ask out a girl?"

Dead silence.

I shifted uncomfortably.

Stoick blinked.

I coughed.

\_This was a really bad idea, \_I thought.

And then, slowly, a grin spread across Stoick's face. "Ohhhhhhâ€¦" he stretched out the word as he took a deep breath. "Somebody's been bitten by the love bug, huh, son?"

>"Umâ€¦uhâ€¦" The heat in my cheeks intensified as his words reached my ears. "It's a hypothetical question!" My voice came out sounding strangled and I found an intense desire to crawl under the table.<p>

Funny how I could lie flawlessly about things like whether I was from Outcast Island or the Peaceable Tribe, but, if I entered a conversation about which girl I liked, I became completely tongue-tied.

"Alright." Stoick nodded, his grin vanishing as quickly as it had come. "So, hypothetically, who would the girl be?"

I released a little breath. "Hypothetically, I'd rather not answer this question."

He raised an eyebrow, but shrugged it off. "If you ask out a girl, the first piece of advice I would give you is to just be yourself."

I blinked, waiting for him to say 'just kidding!' and give me his real gem of advice. When I realized he was being serious and still awaiting my response, I managed, "What? That'sâ€|that's it? Justâ€|be yourself?"

He nodded. "I mean, obviously, you ought to do something, like bring her flowers, maybe, if she's the type, butâ€|just be you, and you should do fine."

"Butâ€|but what if she doesn't like me for me?" I blurted and then realized what I had said. He raised an eyebrow and I went bright red. "Hypothetically," I mumbled.

There was a short, uncomfortable silence.

"Wellâ€|" Stoick shrugged. "If she doesn't like you for youâ€|what's the point? If she can't like you for who you are, you shouldn't be with her."

I scuffed my prosthetic against the wooden floor of the kitchen, inwardly wincing at the loud ding it made from metal on wood. "Soâ€|I should justâ€|be myself? In case you haven't noticed, Stoick, 'myself' isn't very popular with the opposite sex."

"Popularity shouldn't matter to her," he stated firmly, before glancing back down at the table and asking in an off-hand sort of way, "And, uhâ€|hypothetically, who would this girl that you're trying to ask out be?"

I sighed, glancing up at him uncertainly again. "Hypotheticallyâ€|umâ€|hypothetically, can I just not answer that?"

Stoick shook his head slightly, a smile tugging at the corners of his lips. "Okay. Alright." He held up his hands. "Hypothetically, yes you may."

I blew out a breath.

"Hypothetically, is this even hypothetical anymore?" he asked me, raising an eyebrow and letting his hands fall back on the table.

I ran a hand through my hair. "Hypothetically, no, not even close."

He smiled. "I thought so."

I put my head on the table. "Snotlout makes it look so easy to talk to her like this and the thing is, it's not! I mean, why hasn't anyone written a manual on this yet or something? Or, orâ€|like, just a way for a guy to understand the female brain or something! Because, if you ask me, constantly decking me only assures me she doesn't like me!"

Stoick was beginning to look like a light bulb had just clicked on in

his brain. "Ahhhh" he closed his eyes for a long moment, and then opened them again. "It's Astrid, then?"

"I didn't say that."

"She's the one you're always saying is always punching you."

"Yeah, but that could apply to a number of girls on Berk," I defended myself. "Like, you know that Ruffnut or that other girl, what's her name, um"

I cut myself off at the look Stoick was giving me, realizing he had won and I should probably accept defeat.

"Hypothetically, I don't think Astrid likes me. Or flowers." I sighed.

"The least you can do is try."

"If she says no, I'm never going to be able to talk to her again without keeling over from mortification. I mean, she's always telling Snotlout no and he never seems to have any lasting feelings from it, but, I mean, that's him." I sighed.

Stoick nodded. "Well, if she turns out not to like you, Hiccup, at least you told her and she knows and at least you know. I mean, there are millions of people in the world who ask themselves 'what ifs' at night, about everything, everything they never took a chance on. The least you can do is give it a shot. What's the worst that can happen?"

\* \* \*

><p>This previous little endeavor you just witnessed between me and him is the whole reason behind why I am standing on Astrid's door, smoothing down my hair with one hand and holding a bouquet of flowers in the other. I took my hand off my head, nervously ran a finger along the blue, white, red, and yellow flower petals, and then closed the same hand into a fist and knocked on her door.<p>

The next thing I knew, the door opened roughly and there stood, not a beautiful and tough blonde girl, but instead a large, blonde mountain of a man who stared me down like he was a lion seeing prey.

I gulped, deciding on the spot that it was a good idea to hide the flowers behind my back. Trying to stuff them out of sight and also not look like I was nervously anticipating being this guy's next meal, I said in a choked, barely audible voice, "Um hi. I, uh I'm here for Astrid."

Mountain Man grunted. "Speak up, scrawny."

I bit my lip, feeling my cheeks starting to grow hot. "Is Astrid here? I'm looking for her."

"Wait right here. I'll go get her." He disappeared into the house and I heard him talking in much quieter voice than usual, more human than lion. He didn't come back, but Astrid came to the door, brushed her bangs out of her face and smiled, sliding onto the porch. "Hey. I haven't seen you around lately. What brought you here?"



"Umâ€|" I was suddenly aware that my grip on the flowers was sweaty.

Astrid glanced behind her and pulled the door very slightly closed, hopefully blocking out Mountain Man's hearing, because it was then that I just blurted it out. "Doyouwanttogooutwithme?"

"Huh?" she tilted her head slightly to the side, frowning in confusion.

"Do you want to go outâ€|with me?" I inwardly winced at how awkward it sounded and how cheesy I looked as I brought the flowers out from behind my back and held them out to her.

She stared down at the colorful mixture of petals for a second and I dropped my gaze from her face to the ground, shuffling my feet awkwardly as I waited for her to either accept it or laugh at me.

Instead of maybe, I don't know, just using her words to tell me whether or not she liked me, Astrid did what she always did: she punched me right on the shoulder.

"Ow!" I dropped the flowers as my hand flew to my shoulder. "What was that for?"

"What in Thor's name took you so long?" she demanded with a smile, shaking her head and scooping the flowers up from the ground. She gave me a quick kiss on the cheek and then pulled away to continue her rant.

I rubbed my shoulder, wondering how large the bruise was going to be this time around. But, as I looked back up at her, I realized that I wouldn't have had her say yes any other way.

### 13. None of My Business

Untold

Chapter 13 - None of My Business

Summary: Chapter 43 from Stoick's POV.

\*\*A/N: Heyyyy people. I already have chapter 44 from Stoick's POV written as well, so I'm thinking I'll post them both now. Two chapters tonight, to make up for my appalling lack of updates on other stories. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I glanced out the window and saw the snow piling up on our doorstep, realizing what this meant. "I think we're snowed in."<p>

"Like, snowed in, snowed in?" Hiccup asked nervously from somewhere beside me. Looking down, I saw he was leaning heavily on Toothless as he peered out the window, too, eyes wide as he watched the snow falling thickly.

"What other snowed in is there?" I demanded, and then bit my tongue against how harsh it sounded, even to my own ears. Trying to change the subject, I added, "I don't think we'll be able to get out until the snow melts, unless you'd like to try crawling through a window."

My attention was captured by the other houses down below, all covered in white flakes as well. "I suppose others must be snowed in, too."

"How long will it take the snow to melt?" Hiccup asked, slightly nervously.

I shrugged, turning back to him. "It could be a few days, considering the weather here." My mind jumped to the blizzard of Olaf; I sincerely hoped we had nothing like that starting up.

I heard Hiccup walking slowly back to the bed; the swish and clunk of his prosthetic was too foreign to my ears not to notice.

"I hope this storm doesn't last too long," I mumbled, still stuck on thoughts of blizzards.

I stayed by the window for a few long seconds before hearing sounds of creaking metal coming from the bed; walking around to sit in the chair, I saw Hiccup was examining his prosthetic.

I sat down in the chair and turned my eyes to the shelf full of wooden carvings. I picked my most recent one up, along with the knife, carefully avoiding Hiccup's eye.

We sat in silence for a long minute before Hiccup said suddenly, "Wow. That's really good."

Startled, I lifted my head to see he was studying the carving. I opened my mouth to thank him, but before I could, he blushed, trying o backtrack.

"Um...er...sorry, sir..." he mumbled, his face going bright red.

"For what?" The look on his face was so reminiscent of the day that he thought I was going to strike him that I set down the carving and the knife, giving him my full attention.

I tilted my head, and my helmet slid dangerously. I tugged it off my head and set it down on the shelf, turning back to Hiccup.

It took him a long while to answer. Finally, he said, "Er, 'well, I don't know. You were carving and I said that's really good and maybe you don't like people...never mind."

It was clear his explanation consisted only of that, so I shrugged it off, turning back to the carving I was working on. I worked on it for a few more seconds, but I could feel Hiccup's gaze on me, so I turned back to him, cocking my head slightly.

"What?" He asked, like it was I who had started this strange sort of staring contest.

"Nothing," I replied, my eyes going back to my carving. "Just...uh, thinking, is all."

"Do you...do you mind me watching?" Hiccup asked hesitantly, shyly. "I don't have to, I can...I can do something else..."

"No," I interrupted quickly. "That wasn't what I..." I trailed off. There were so many things I wanted to say, so many things I could tell he wanted to say and yet we both kept our mouths shut. "Anyway," I finished awkwardly, turning my attention back to the carving. It wasn't like it mattered. He was leaving tomorrow. The last thing I ought to do was pull him closer.

I focused on the carving for a few more minutes, but Hiccup made a strange noise in the silence, almost like he was sniffing. When I looked up, he was wiping at his nose and eyes with his sleeve, quietly crying.

His tears alarmed me; I wasn't very good at dealing with tears and I wasn't even sure why he was crying in the first place.

"Are you alright?" I asked, keeping my eyes trained on him as I waited for the answer. He started slightly when he looked at me; his eyes still glistened with tears.

"Yeah." His voice was throaty and thick, but he glanced back down at himself, looking at a piece of lint on his sleeve.

A part of me wanted to press it, wanted to discover the reason behind his tears...but I knew he was leaving soon, I knew he didn't trust me and he had very good reason, and I knew he was embarrassed that I'd seen his tears at all.

I turned slowly back to my carving, still with one eye on Hiccup, who was no longer examining his linty sleeves; he was using his sleeve to wipe his eyes again.

He began playing with the blankets, studying them very carefully, almost nervously. "Um...so...uh..."

I glanced up at him curiously, wondering if he was going to try and say something meaningful, maybe tell me...maybe he would tell me he had forgiven me or...or...

All the wonderful possibilities of all the things he might be about to say filled my head and I waited to hear what he was going to say.

"D-does weather always get this bad on Berk in winter?"

My shoulders slumped slightly, but I tried to mask my disappointment by examining my carving minutely. "Ninety percent of the time, yes. But sometimes, we'll get very hot summers and the winters won't be as bad."

As silence fell between us once more, I put down the knife and the carving, turning to him purposefully. I didn't want to let the silence claim another hour or so of our time together. "I actually had a question for you."

I was sure he wasn't going to be very responsive, so I began speaking before he could get a word in. "What did he mean earlier, when you said you'd become his conquer?"

"Who?" Hiccup asked blankly.

"Alvin," I explained, almost absentmindedly picking up the knife and playing with it. "He called you his conquer. He called you his. What did he mean?"

Hiccup's silence was a very long one. He stared down at the floor, scuffing his boot against it, his brow knitting again. He glanced up at me uncertainly, looking me up and down...and then he shrugged. "No idea. Guess because I used to live in his village."

"The way they treated you, though," I whispered, my mind straying far from his response. "They talked about you like...like..."

I struggled to find a suitable analogy, something, some way to tell him it was wrong.

"...Like you weren't even there."

"He treated you like you were less than." And you seemed to expect it.

"I know." He whispered quietly, but his fingers had gone very white from how hard he was gripping the edge of his bed. He tucked his hair behind his ears, playing self-consciously with his hands, trying his best not to meet my eye.

And suddenly it occurred to me that the message that he somehow was inferior might have been beaten into his head, that he might even believe he really was. The thought angered me, but I knew a sudden show of rage would do him no good; I was angry because he shouldn't think that way, because none of those Outcasts were worth even a tenth of him.

"You're not." I said quietly.

His head snapped up. "What?"

"Less than. You're not. Alvin...the way he spoke to you...it was like you were. But you're not."

His cheeks colored. "Oh."

"Yeah." I nodded. "Thought I'd, you know, put that out there."

"Oh." He repeated uncertainly. "Thank you, sir."

"Don't let him," I added. I wanted to reach out for him, tilt his chin upward so he had to look at me, but I understood now that he didn't like being touched and I thought I understood why. "Don't let him tell you that. Or...or anyone else for that matter. You're better than that."

The flush in his cheeks seemed to deepen. "Um, okay. Thanks...I think..."

"I mean it," I insisted.

"I know," he nodded.

"I'm sorry," I whispered, turning back to the carving, although my mind had never been farther from it.

"For what?" He looked confused.

"For that," I replied. "I don't want him to have made you feel less than."

"Sir, I think it's his life ambition to make everybody feel that way," he told me quietly. His tone was completely serious, and somehow that made his words even more amusing.

I smiled slightly. "You've got a point." But he treats you worse than anyone else, I wanted to say, but I bit my tongue, my mind flashing back to our conversation. I shouldn't press him. It was none of my business.

#### 14. Home

Untold

#### Chapter 14 - Home

Summary: I didn't want him to hide from me anymore; not in shame, not in embarrassment, not in fear...

**\*\*A/N: Err...yeah. Here you go.\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>There was another long silence between us, a silence in which Hiccup stared at the ground, his brow knitting again as he thought. He glanced around the room several times, an uncertain, anguished expression making its way across his face.<p>

"I actually had a question for you," I admitted, setting down my carving knife and the wooden carving. "You say you're leaving Berk, right?"

"Yes, sir," he nodded.

"Where will you go?" I asked, and then immediately wished I hadn't; it wasn't any of my business, so why was I asking?

"What?"

"If you don't wish to tell me, I understand," I added hurriedly, "but you say you're leaving, but you've got nowhere to go."

For a moment, he sat there in silence, staring at me. "I...I don't know." He looked so forlorn, so lost...if only he would accept a home here, on Berk.

But I knew that could never be.

"I see," I replied quietly.

"There are islands, though," he added quickly, like he was trying to convince both himself and me. "I-I know people. I'll do something. I'll fix it."

"You'll find something," I repeated softly, with a nod. "I see."

Yes. I did see. I saw that he was being foolish about this. For the love of Thor, what was wrong with waiting until he'd actually found a reliable place?

I turned back to the carving in my hand, trying not to say that aloud. I examined it for a second, looking for mistakes, and, when I glanced over, Hiccup was looking at the ground, his face wet with tears.

"Are you alright?" I asked, trying to sound gentle and not alarmed.

"Y-yes," he replied thickly.

"You're crying." I told him and then instantly realized how stupid it sounded. 'Thank you, Einstein.'

His fingers flew up to his cheek, feeling around for the tears. I had never known somebody could cry without realizing they were, but clearly they could. 'I leaned over and gently dried his tears for him, pulling away and looking down at the shining liquid on my finger for a second.

Had I upset him this badly with asking where he was going? "I'm sorry," I told him quietly. "I didn't mean to upset you."

"What?" He asked me in a shaky voice, glancing up at me with a now-dry face.

"I didn't mean to upset you," I told him again. I reached out for him, my fingers finding his shoulder and resting there. I tried not to be hurt at the way he flinched away at first. I had hurt him and now I was paying the price. But I was going to make it better. No matter how long I took, I was going to make things right; even if I didn't get a book happy ending, I wanted him to understand that I would never hurt him. "I didn't mean you had nowhere," I continued. "I meant if you don't count Berk."

"Oh." His voice was strangely choked. He kept wiping at his eyes, obviously trying to keep it quiet so I wouldn't notice. I turned back to my carving so he wouldn't think I'd seen him. "Um..." his voice still sounded strangled and I knew the moment I stepped out of the room, he was going to start crying.

I put down my knife and my carving, about to stand up, to give him his privacy to cry.

A few more weak sounds made their way out of his throat and then, quite suddenly, with no warning, he burst into tears. They weren't quiet sobs, modest or quiet. They were deep, heart-wrenching sobs

that he was trying so hard to quell.

I stood, debating between walking away and letting him cry by himself, but for some reason, I found I couldn't do that. I sank to my knees beside his bed and held out my arms, but he didn't look at me once, so I pulled him closer. He was rigid for a few seconds, his tears quieting before I rubbed his back gently, soothingly and he collapsed into brokenness again. He wasn't rigid anymore; he was all over the place.

He clutched at me like I was a lifeline, his only lifeline and I hugged him tight, letting him sob as much as he wanted.

"It's okay." I whispered. Tears threatened to fall from my own eyes at the sight of his, but I pushed them back; I had to be strong for him. "It's alright, Hiccup. You're alright."

His tears began to quiet again as he tried to stop them, but after a few seconds, he gave up. His grip on my shirt tightened, his sobs causing him to tremble. The choked noises making their way up from his mouth might've been more sobs, I couldn't tell. I held him gently, but tightly, letting him cry, letting him get it out.

It occurred to me as I sat there that he must not have cried for a very long time. I hugged him tighter, bending my body to match his, to hold him better.

I could hear his sobs beginning to quiet. Everything was very quiet as he gave one final sniff, staying very quiet and still in my arms.

"Hiccup..." I whispered. I wanted to comfort him, but how could I? What could I say to him? What could I possibly say to help him, to fix him? "Hiccup-"

But there was nothing to be said. I shook my head.

He had gone quiet in my arms and, just when I thought he was going to start crying again, he tightened his hold on me. "I love you." His voice was shaky and threatened to break, but the words were unmistakable.

I gasped slightly at hearing the words, my hold on him turning from a gentle hug into a rigid and awkward pose.

I hesitated, unsure if saying it back would only drive him away. I sat in another long second of silence, and I became aware he was starting to stiffen in my arms. I tightened my hug, realizing silently that he needed me to say it back, he needed to hear it. How long had it been since he'd heard the words? How long had it been since he'd said them?

"I love you, too," I whispered, tightening my hold; he was starting to struggle against me, and I didn't want to let him go just yet. When the words left my mouth, his struggles died down just as soon as they had started. He hugged me back now, but he was careful, uncertain.

"You're alright, you know that?" I whispered to reassure him. "You're safe and I won't let anyone hurt you."

There was silence for a second and then Hiccup gave another small sob; I could tell he tried to keep it quiet, but all the same, my heart broke for him. His grip on me tightened and he was sitting so close to me he was almost in my lap by now, but I didn't care; I just held him tight and I held him close.

He pulled away from me suddenly, biting his lip.  
"Um...uh...Da-Stoick?" The slip-up was quick and the correction even quicker, but I still caught it. He had nearly called me 'Dad'.

I wanted to hug him again and tell him it was okay - he didn't have to call me Stoick, or Chief, or even 'sir'; Dad was just fine with me. As I opened my mouth to tell him so, I realized he was bright red, face flushed with shame and embarrassment at his mistake. It would only humiliate him more if I drew attention to it in any way.

"Go on," I said instead, quietly.

"Did...did Alvin say anything?" He blurted. "About when I was on Outcast Island? You said you're not gonna let anybody hurt me." He dropped his head, a sheet of red hair falling in front of his eyes. I put a hand under his chin and slowly lifted his face up. I didn't want him to hide from me anymore; not in shame, not in embarrassment, not in fear...

"It made me think of Alvin." He whispered. "I was wondering whether he'd told you anything...by the way you're acting."

I didn't want to say the truth, but Alvin's words flashed through my mind once more, hard as I had been trying not to think about them: 'You think you want this boy? Maybe, Stoick, you should learn a little bit more about this son of yours first...'

"A little." It would do no good to lie. When I saw him beginning to look uncomfortable and ashamed again, trying to duck his head so he could hide behind his hair, I kept a tight hold on his chin. "He didn't say much. He was really only trying to get me to free him from my conditions, specifically the one including you."

I hesitated to say the rest. "Some of the things he told me, Hiccup..." and then I stopped myself. If he was so ashamed at the mere thought that I had heard something about him, I didn't want to admit to him how much Alvin had really told me. "I don't believe them, Hiccup," I told him for emphasis. "Never mind."

"What did he say?" Hiccup's shaking voice gave his nervousness away.

"Just things. I guess I'm still wondering if they're true," I admitted hesitantly.

"What do you mean?" He asked nervously.

"I shouldn't ask you," I told him, pulling away from the hug. "It's your business..."

"What do you want to know?" He asked uncertainly. He glanced down at the floor and mumbled, "I can tell you a little...if you're curious,



I mean."

## 15. Childish

Untold

### Chapter 15 - Childish

Summary: Hiccup has more effect on Stoick than the chieftain realizes.

\*\*A/N: Yeahhh. Here's a small part of chapter 25 from Stoick's POV. It just occurred to me, I don't know. xP Since I'm doing large chunks from his POV, I thought 'why not' and this was born. I just thought maybe, as chief, Stoick values the village's opinion a lot, but then he realizes Hiccup's happiness means more to him. Yep :)\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I took in the giant, half-completed snow Viking before even realizing I was still holding onto Hiccup in an attempt to steady him.<p>

When I remembered this, I made to draw away from him, only to realize he was nearly white with cold and shivering.

"You're freezing," I commented with a frown, letting go of him.

He straightened up when I released him, a confused look overtaking his face. "Wellâ€¦I'm kind of cold, I guess, butâ€¦"

"Your skin is going to turn blue," I told him sternly. "Your lips are going to grow icicles and your tongue is going to fall out."

"It will not!" Gobber remarked loudly. "My parents always told me they would and they never did!"

"All the same, I think you two should get inside. C'mon. My day has just ended, you guys can come in and get warm in my house if you like," I offered.

"Butâ€¦our snow Vikingâ€¦" Gobber began helplessly.

"C'mon, Gobber," Hiccup encouraged, turning around to look at him. "We can finish him tomorrow."

"He'll melt!" Gobber announced dramatically.

\_What a tragedy, \_I thought to myself.

"We have to finish him first," Gobber insisted and then turned to me, his eyes going wide and pleading.

I knew what he wanted and I nearly refused, but I saw Hiccup perk up slightly too, green eyes turning wide and hopeful.

"This is the point where my friendly affection should stop," I murmured sourly, but I still walked forward and joined in.

For the first few minutes, I glanced around, how childish this looked, before Hiccup tugged on my sleeve and pointed to the snow Viking proudly; he now had eyes and a mouth.

My gaze instantly went back to Hiccup and I realized his eyes were glowing, his face alight with childish wonder and happiness.

He was clearly delighted with the snow Viking, laughing and unable to stop grinning as he helped me collect twigs for his arms.

And, although my behavior did raise a few eyebrows, I found I didn't care quite as much as I might have before. The glowing smile on Hiccup's face made it worth every second.

## 16. Stay Close to Me

Untold

Chapter 16 - Stay Close to Me

Summary: Chapter 45 from Stoick's POV

\*\*A/N: Here you go.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>The idea that he trusted me enough to be honest with me warmed my heart; I hugged him a little tighter as I spoke. "You grew up on Outcast Island, then?"<p>

He pulled away slightly, looking up at me as he replied.  
"Yeah."

"What...what was it like?" The question slipped out before I even thought about it.

"I don't really know what makes it different from other islands. It was a lot different from here, though," he added softly, his expression suddenly taking on a wistful look. "I'll tell you that."

My heart tugged at the loneliness and longing in his voice as my mind traveled back, back to everything Alvin had told me and everything I had seen.

I gently rubbed his back as I spoke. "Yes. I know it's a lot different." I would see to it that Berk never would be like Outcast Island, either. It wouldn't be a place of fear to him, but a place of refuge. If he wanted it to be, then it could be his home.

I stared down at him for a long second, thinking about how sad he looked all the time, how all of his smiles had always been bitter quirks of the lips, never genuine, not until recently. I thought about how he'd come here with millions of scars on his face and neck and hands, how he flinched whenever I so much as tried to touch him.

He had learned to do that from Alvin. The Peaceable Tribe didn't teach you to flinch when somebody reached for you, it didn't leave

scars on its members. How could I not have seen this all before?

"I should've known." I hadn't realized I'd spoken my thoughts aloud until Hiccup responded.

"You should've known what?"

"Nothing," I replied automatically, but at his piercing look, I elaborated. "I was only saying...I was thinking of when you first arrived here." I hesitated on saying what I had in mind. I decided to take a chance and say it. "You flinched like you thought people were going to hit you every five seconds. You had whip marks all over your shoulders and I bet they're on your back, too. You have scars everywhere and you back away when other people so much as touch you."

I put one hand on his face, gently cupping his cheek. Maybe I shouldn't have touched him without him okaying it first, but I wanted to hold onto some part of him right then. I wanted to hold him right then and make it all better.

"I should've known." I exhaled. "You fooled me with your lies about the Peaceable Tribe...I'm looking back on it and wondering why I didn't see it all before."

There was a silence.

"It's hard to spot sometimes," he told me gently. "When you don't really want to know the truth and when you want to believe lies, you don't look too hard. Not even if it's right in front of you."

I had most definitely not wanted to know the truth, even when I began to suspect. When he'd flinched away from me that day in my house, when he'd thought I was going to strike him, I had begun to suspect that he wasn't a Peaceable. But what had I done?

I had ignored all the signs and loved him anyway. I had loved him whether it was right or wrong and I had shoved my suspicions to the back of my mind, and I'd hoped that he was telling the truth. I had chosen to believe he was telling the truth. Because I had loved him too much to stay away. Even when I knew it was better to keep my distance, I had chosen to grow close.

It was clear why he had lied about being an Outcast. But what wasn't clear to me, what I began to think would never be fully clear enough to me, was why he was afraid. Why did he flinch when I went to touch him? Why did he think I was going to hit him? Why had he reacted so badly when I'd reached for him? Why did he always seem to think somebody was out to hurt him?

I knew Outcast Island was a rough place to live and he would have had it worse than anyone else, being the runt of the litter, but...was he really as badly mistreated there as Alvin had made it seem?

I glanced down at him, suddenly struck by this realization, the realization that, although I might know him now, I knew nothing about what he had gone through. I could tell from the tentative and slightly afraid look in his eyes that he had seen unspeakable things, that unspeakable things had been done to him, but I wasn't content with that knowledge. I wanted to know him better than this. If he was

alright with it, I wanted him to tell me everything.

"I'm curious," I informed him.

"I know you are," he told me.

"No." I had to impress upon him that I didn't want to know a little; I wanted to know everything, if he was willing to tell me. "You told me you could tell me a little bit if I was curious. I am curious, but not about the small things. I want to know why you acted that way."

His brow furrowed, like he was trying to think of what "that way" was.

"When you first wound up here," I added for explanation. "The way you acted. I just explained it to you. I know Outcast Island is a rough place to live, but...that rough?" I hesitated slightly before adding the rest. "You told me before I knew the truth that it was the Peaceable tribe. That you got into fights with them sometimes."

There was a short silence.

"Can you tell me the truth?"

Another silence as Hiccup stared at the floor, an odd expression beginning on his face. "Um..."

I had overstepped. He didn't want to talk about it. "You don't have to talk," I whispered hastily. "Not if you don't want to."

He peeked up at me tentatively, dropped his eyes back to the ground and said in a quiet, croaky voice, "It wasn't ever fights. It was Alvin." He glanced up at me again, hesitant and afraid.

I tried to keep my expression neutral, even though I was boiling with rage inside. I had suspected this from the first time I'd seen them interact, but it didn't suffice for the real thing. The idea that Alvin had even so much as touched my Hiccup with the intent to harm was enough to make me see red.

I knew a show of anger would do him no good, however, so I tried to keep it quiet as I whispered, "Go on."

He hesitated for another long moment, staring down at Toothless. "I've already told you that Toothless lost half his tail when we met. It was another Outcast who'd shot him down. And so Alvin told him to take a small search party into the forest and look for him. There was a little cove in the forest, all blocked off by boulders. The entrance was so small nobody but I could go through it. I was in the forest when the sounds of the hunting party reached my ears."

He stopped here to take a quick peek up at me, as if he expected me to be glaring at him. I wasn't exactly sure where he was going with his story and how Alvin tied in, so I sat there silently, waiting for him to continue.

"I went in the cove to avoid them and that's when I stumbled across Toothless." He gave the dragon's head a comforting pat and glanced

down at him affectionately as he scratched him behind the ears.

He glanced up again, a timid and fearful two-second look, before lowering his head again. "Toothless couldn't fly away and there was nowhere else in the forest for me to go to avoid the other villagers than there. I went there every week and after awhile, I began visiting him every day. I tried to bring him food and he got angry the first couple times because he thought I was trying to trick him. After awhile, we..." he glanced uncertainly down at Toothless, running a hand over his dragon's head again, fingers shaking slightly. "...we just sort of trusted each other."

Toothless fanned his wings out behind Hiccup in a gesture similar to a hug, nearly wrapping the boy in his wings, gently nuzzling Hiccup's hair with his nose.

Hiccup hesitated as he opened his mouth, glancing up at Toothless like he was asking for permission.

Toothless gently brushed his wing across Hiccup's cheek, and the boy smiled.

He glanced right back up at me again, uncertain, nervous. He dropped his gaze. "Um...and then...one day..." his story was coming in a reluctant manner, uncertainty and hesitation written in every line of his face. "...I decided to show the other people on Outcast Island that...that dragons were different."

I winced inwardly at the tale he was telling, the terrible ending that I knew was sure to come.

I studied him as I thought of this, wondering what kind of pain he had gone through that caused him to slow his story and peek up at me again, tentative and careful. He hadn't been killed, obviously, and Toothless was still here too, so I couldn't draw to any terrible conclusions yet.

It was clear he was waiting for some type of response from me, so I simply said, "I see. Go on."

"I tried telling them, but...but they didn't listen. And Alvin was watching, too, and he took me...into our home...and...well..." a look of shame and fear cloaked his face and it was like a veil had been lifted from my eyes. I thought I now understood his reaction to me whenever I tried to touch him.

"He hit you?" I tried to keep my voice neutral, but it shook with rage.

Hiccup shifted self-consciously, playing with his hands. "Maybe," he mumbled defensively.

There was a short silence.

"Yes." He admitted quietly.

He reached up and put a hand on his cheek, touching it absently. Maybe he was unaware that he was doing it, but I was aware. As his fingers drifted over his face one last time, I realized that his expression had darkened, his face a mixture of shame and fear.

Although he was sixteen years old, the expression on his face made him appear much younger, more like ten or eleven.

The rage boiling just beneath the surface calmed suddenly, overtaken by worry for him. "You don't have to talk," I whispered. "Not if you don't want to."

There was a second of shaky, confused silence and then he whispered, "I'm okay." He nodded a little, trying to reassure me, trying to make his trembling lips form a brave face for me.

He tried to pick up his story again, but it was clear he was feeling wrong-footed. "Well, once Alvin and I had..." he hesitated. "...um, talked, he, um...he told me to renounce it. He said that if I wanted to stay alive and a part of the Outcasts, that I would have to kill a dragon and then nothing more would be said about it. I would like to think..." he hesitated for another long second. "...I would like to think that I had the strength to say no to him, but that strength only came when he insisted that the dragon be Toothless. I knew I'd fail then, though, so what was the point in trying, even if I didn't care about him?"

He sighed a little as he continued. "I told Alvin I wasn't going to do it and he got so mad..." he shuddered slightly, and I felt again the need to protect, the need to fight for him. "He locked us up and told us we were gonna be executed in the morning."

The need to protect fizzed, even stronger now than ever, along with the insatiable rage. I wanted to let him keep talking, but I found I had to interrupt. "He tried to kill you?"

"Oh, no," Hiccup replied matter-of-factly. "No, he decided against that. I tried to escape with Toothless, you see, and we only ever made it to Hysteric Isle. Alvin found me within two days, I think it was. He normally finds me in about a week or two. I'm surprised it took him so long to find me here."

The way he spoke - like this was all in a day's work for your average Viking - caught me off-guard. It was like this kind of treatment had been accepted for so long that he had learned not only to accept it but also to expect it. My mind flashed again to the night he thought I was going to hit him.

And then I latched onto another thing he'd said and I felt surprise take over my pity. "You've been to Hysteric Isle?"

"They weren't so bad," Hiccup responded. "Now they did it nice and polite to my face; they told me that they were going to kill me, instead of leading me around in circles like Alvin likes to do." He shrugged. "At least they were straightforward about it."

Again, the matter-of-fact tone made me wonder. He was so calm when discussing people plotting his murder; I wondered incredulously for a moment if he had felt scared through one second of this.

That question was silenced by the harsh reply I gave myself: 'of course he was, Stoick,' I chided. 'He must've been terrified.'

The moment the thought hit, I realized his straightforward way of telling me this, this sudden directness, it was all a brave front. He

was scared and he had been. Telling me this did bother him, only he wanted to pretend it didn't.

I stared down at him for a second, debating between telling him it was okay to be afraid and thinking this would sound like a Hallmark greeting card.

Before I could make the decision, Hiccup said quickly, "So, yeah...Alvin got me back."

I could tell he was only trying to change the subject, but for what reason, I wasn't sure. Nonetheless, I tried to fix my features into an expression that meant I was listening.

"Anyway," Hiccup was saying, "he got me back, I escaped, he got me back, I escaped, he got me back...this continued on for a few years by the way, so...not much to tell there."

My eyebrows flew up as his words reached my ears. At the most, I would have guessed this treatment had lasted a couple weeks. "Years?" I repeated, the word foul on my tongue as I began to suspect that he might have been through this longer than I first thought. "How...how old were you when this happened, Hiccup?"

"Um...well..." he wrinkled his nose and furrowed his brow, tilting his head to the side. "I met Toothless when I was ten, I know that much...ten, eleven...yeah, I was twelve when I was told to renounce Toothless and by the time they'd locked me up, I was almost thirteen. So...thirteen and fourteen is when I kept trying to escape. So, that would've made me fifteen when I decided to actually plan something out and run hell bent for leather with Toothless and by the time I'd got to put it into action, I'm pretty sure I'd turned sixteen, although I could still be fifteen."

The confusion about his own age shouldn't have hit me that hard. But the thing was, he didn't know his own age, and he'd spent so many years in the dark that it had become his normal. His treatment on Outcast Island had become such a heavy part of him and as much as I wanted him to leave it behind, I knew he could only let go little by little, not all at once.

The part that ignited my temper was the utter helplessness I felt, the complete inability to make it better. How could I ever take away the things he had suffered, the pain he had endured? "I'm sorry." It wasn't enough, but it was a start.

"No need." Again, the brave front forced onto his face when I knew he was doing it to hide how hard it was for him. "I'm doing fine."

"I know that," I replied softly. "But still..."

He looked up at me for a long second, opened his mouth and closed it again. I thought he might admit to his fear, or his sadness and loneliness. Maybe he would tell me something, maybe he would go deeper. I could see he was holding so much back, like he was afraid of delving into it for my sake. Or maybe he was just afraid because he didn't like to talk about it. Maybe it wasn't for my sake that he kept it from me. Maybe it was for his own, to keep himself from breaking down again.

Nonetheless, I waited to see if he would tell me more.

And then...

"When will this snow stop?"

## 17. The Almost Father

Untold

### Chapter 17 - The Almost Father

Summary: He was so familiar, but yet so foreign...

**\*\*A/N:** This chapter and the next were written originally as a gift for RazzlePazzleDooDot who said chapter 3 was one of her favorites.  
**\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>It happened as if in slow motion: the figure fell from the dragon's back, his arms spread wide, his mouth open in shock. Other tribes probably didn't dare attack Night Furies.<p>

I saw the figure drawing closer and closer to the sand and, though I wasn't close enough to see his face, I imagined him closing his eyes and readying himself for the blow. I waited for him to hit the ground, watching like everybody else.

Instead of hitting the ground, however, the Night Fury looked down and, abandoning his quest for a safe landing, he snatched the boy out of the air with his claws, gripping the boy's upper arms tightly. The small Viking's boots kicked up a cloud of dust and sand as the dragon released him carefully, letting him fall onto the sand gently.

The Night Fury collapsed beside the boy, drinking in the sight of the human, safe and sound on the sand beside him.

I guess you could say that I wasn't ready for all of this excitement, especially not this early in the morning, which I definitely considered as too early to deal with all of this. I stared down at the boy and the dragon for half a second and struggled to regain my composure. I was still the chief, I still had to lead these people, and they were looking to me for guidance. They had never had to deal with this before, either.

"Get them." I ordered quietly. "Lock them up."

"Lock them up?" Mildew was the only one to question my order. "Are youâ€|you can't be serious, Stoick."

"When he wakes up," I nodded at the boy, "let me know and I'll be there straightaway."

"Do you honestly want to keep a devil on Berk?" Mildew asked incredulously; the dragon's teeth on the end of his staff rattled as he pointed at the small red-haired boy who was really not much bigger than the average Viking toddler.



"A devil?" Gobber repeated disbelievingly.

"Think of it!" Mildew snapped crossly, banging his staff once upon the ground. "This boy has just been riding the most evil of all dragons, a Night Fâ€œ"

"Put a sock in it, Mildew," Gobber advised.

His interruption did the trick; Mildew looked so surprised and cross that he quit while he was ahead, instead just sending me a venomous glare.

Far too used to the old man's antics to care, I turned to the few villagers who had listened to my request; the Night Fury was now chained up completely and Spitelout held the boy's limp body in his arms.

That was when I got my first real glimpse at the young boy's face. He had countless freckles splashed across his cheeks, a mop of red hair with bangs that fluffed out and covered his eyebrows, clothes that were ragged and ripped in every possible area imaginable until you really couldn't call it clothing anymore so much as rags. The one garment that remained intact was the thick, brown fur vest he wore. He slumped against Spitelout's arm, worry lines creasing his eyebrows. He wasn't scarred enough to be disfigured, but just by looking at him, I could tell he had had more injuries than your average Viking sustains in his lifetime.

He was just a boy. He was merely a child, resting his head on Spitelout's shoulder, just a boy who barely looked more than ten or eleven. But it wasn't this realization, no, it wasn't pity that made me pause.

It was the auburn hair that was the same shade as Val's had been. The freckles on his face that were in the same spots hers had been. The frown of discomfort as he shifted slightly in Spitelout's arms, unconsciously struggling to regain consciousness, reaching up to put a hand on his head.

He looked so much like her, like Valhallarama. There could be no mistaking it. Hers was the face that I saw in my dreams and whenever I closed my eyes, it was there behind my lids, laughing and joking, as wonderfully carefree as she had always been in life.

I knew it was memory, not grief, that made me recognize him.

He looked too much like her for it to be coincidence. And in that moment, I froze, the cry of seagulls ringing in my ears, waves crashing against the rocks, the world suddenly tilting under me as I felt like the carpet had been yanked out from underneath my feet once more. The gods really loved to mess with me.

I tried to steady myself. I told myself I had a village to look after and that I couldn't let myself get caught up in this. But then, I realized as my eyes flickered back down to him, I couldn't let this slip through my fingers, either. He looked too much like her for it to possibly be real. He had to have her blood running through his veins, because that shade of red was her hair and those sunspots were her sunspots. That face shape was her face shape and those long arms were her arms.

As I came back to myself, I realized my people were staring at me, concerned frowns etched on their faces.

Spitelout was starting to head for the dungeons, the ones last used in Grimbeard's time, and I reached out a hand and stopped him.

"No." My voice was low and cracked, trembling with grief.

"Stoickâ€|" My brother's voice contained only worry for me.

"No. I-I've changed my mind. I don't want him in a cell anymore. Lock the dragon up, but give me the boy."

Gobber and Spitelout exchanged uncertain looks, so I tried to inject some more urgency into my voice. "Give him to me, now!"

Spitelout obeyed hesitantly, and, when I had him in my arms, I was taken by surprise. He was small, yes, but also light and wispy, his slim build making him easy to hold. He stirred a bit more persistently in my arms and I tightened my hold on him, making sure to keep it gentle but firm.

I stared down at him for another long second, fascinated by how much he looked like her, caught up in wondering if his eyes would be the same sparkling emerald. Or would they be gray, like mine? I wondered for half a second and my heart clenched.

\_He's got nothing to do with you, you know that.\_

No, that couldn't be true. There wasn't much that made him resemble me at all, but he had to have been related to her in some way and the only way I could think was if he was her son.

As I struggled to remember myself, I became aware that the villagers were still staring at me, and even the stupidest had by now realized something out of the ordinary was occurring here. "Umâ€|" My voice trembled in my uncertainty. "Goâ€|"go about your business." I lifted my chin resolutely, offering them no explanation, although I knew that was the quickest way to start a rumor. I didn't care. All I wanted was to escape.

When nobody moved, I began to speak again, but, to my surprise, it was Gobber who cleared them all away instead. "ALRIGHT, GET OUT OF HERE, YA NOSY COWS!" he shouted insultingly. "THE CHIEF WANTS TO QUESTION THE BOY, CAN'T YOU SEE THAT? NOW GET OUT OF HERE!"

The villagers dispersed quickly after that and I sent Gobber a nod of thanks as I began to trudge back to my house. He fell easily into step beside me, twisting his prosthetic around on its base.

I eyed him for a couple seconds. "Gobber, I think it's best if I talk to him alone first."

"Stoickâ€|" Gobber glanced uneasily around; the people who hadn't witnessed the boy's arrival were clearly curious about who I was holding. He gave a slightly frustrated sigh. "Oh, forget it. Let's wait till we get there."

I wanted to tell him he wasn't coming with me, but then I realized that a part of me genuinely wanted to spill my suspicions to Gobber. I tightened my lips and my hold on the boy.

When I reached the creaky wooden door to my house and had pushed it open, Gobber began speaking. "Stoick"

I turned away from him, fussing with getting the boy settled on the floor. He shivered slightly in his sleep, reaching out for me. "Toothless" he mumbled deliriously. "Toothless"

His shudders and mumbles decreased when I covered him up with a blanket, but, without his voice to distract me, I realized he was strikingly different from Val in several ways. The few injuries I had noticed decorating his face were highlighted by scars, scars and more scars, covering his face and neck and hands, every inch of unprotected skin I saw. His sleeve was badly torn and I could see the scars of a whip disfiguring the pale shoulder.

Gobber must've seen it, too, because he let out a surprised gasp. He knelt down next to the boy and sent me a questioning look. He brushed the boy's bangs away from his hairline, revealing a long, thin cut with dried blood caked around the edges. "Stoick" he began uncertainly, but before he could finish, the boy on the floor stirred suddenly, reaching up to bat Gobber's hand away from his feathery strands.

"Stop it." he mumbled irritably. "Stop touching me."

Gobber instantly took his hand off the boy's hair, glancing up at me with a worried, 'now-what?' expression. As if he thought I had any idea what to do. He knew me well enough to know that sometimes, I didn't know what to do.

Gobber glanced down at the teen once more with a slight sigh.

"I don't like this."

I cut my gaze down to look at the boy once more, shuddering and shivering beneath the thin and ragged blanket. "I know you don't."

"Stoick, this is bad." He mumbled lamely. He jerked his head like he was trying to meet my gaze but couldn't quit staring at the boy on my floor.

"He" I hesitated before adding the rest. "He needs somewhere to go."

"And maybe he doesn't." Gobber replied. "Maybe he just washed up on our island with no supplies \_at this time\_. In fact, what if he's going back to his island soon to meet up with his parents?"

"I don't" I stared down at the boy for another long second. "I don't think he does. It's a feeling I have." Even at Gobber's derisive snort, I clung to my conviction. He looked very alone, very independent. Somehow, I got the feeling he had nobody but himself.

"Stoick," Gobber began pacing heavily back and forth, hands clasped

behind his back, brow furrowed. "This isn't good. You can't do this."

His words left an icy silence in their wake. My hesitation only seemed to prove his point.

"He needs somewhere to go," I murmured, pacing the length of the living room and hitting the kitchen. "We can't just turn him away."

Yet I met his eyes and suddenly knew that I could, that I should. It was a bad, no terrible, idea to allow the boy to stay.

Gobber followed me into the kitchen. I looked him right in the eye, fully ready to confirm and acknowledge that yes, this was a bad idea. I had merely forgotten myself in the aftermath of seeing him. I took a breath to say these words, but before I could, Gobber murmured sympathetically, "I know what this is about, Stoick. Really, I do."

And it was this, above all, that made me stop. I felt the clenching of my jaw. Of course. He thought I couldn't deal with this boy being on my island, worried that it would break me. Worried that I would get too close, only to get my heart broken again.

And that's when I made the decision. I would keep the boy at arm's length, I would not get close to him. Harshness would mask the affection that had welled up so suddenly, unbidden, unwanted, uncertain.

I wasn't sure if it was right, if it was okay, to feel like this about somebody else on principle. It was because he resembled her a bit, that was all, I told myself, setting my jaw. Gobber would see how distant I could make myself.

"Oh, and what is this about, Gobber?" I hoped my icy tone would be met with only silence, but Gobber had never been one to keep himself to himself.

"It's about Hakon, isn't it?" he whispered.

When I gave a slight gasp, when my jaw unclenched slightly and I reached out to the wall to steady myself, I saw Gobber's sympathetic look again, and again, all it did was stiffen my resolve.

I struggled to regain my composure at hearing my almost son's name. The almost name for the almost son. There had been a lot of almosts with Hakon.

"Of course not," I managed, although my voice was shaking slightly; not a very good defense. "This is about a Viking in need. I admit, I thought he was a little—well okay, Mildew had me believing it when he said this was clearly a sign he was evil, being rescued by the deadliest of dragons, but—" I sighed, looking back into the living room where the boy lay. "Look at him, Gobber." And then I realized that, if I hadn't, we might not be in this situation in the first place.

"Really look at him. He's all bloodied up and he's so small he couldn't possibly have put up much of a fight against whoever did it."

He's just a kid."

Gobber was silent for a long second, staring at me suspiciously. I think I lied so well in that moment about the reasons for my strange behavior that I convinced even myself in that moment.

Of course, it's always easier to lie to yourself than to a friend, and Gobber's narrowed eyes stayed calculating as he spoke. "If it all goes to hell, just know I warned you, in any case."

I took a deep breath.

A sudden creaking from the next room made me hold that breath. I peeked into the living room and saw the boy sitting up, looking around himself in slightly awed bewilderment.

And, when I slowly edged into the room, taking another good, long look at him, I drew a breath as his eyes met mine. Green. Emerald green. Sparkling, slightly scared, near flinching emerald green.

I blew out a breath, taking a step closer to him. He drew back, looking almostâ€|afraid.

Oh, yes, the gods really did love to mess with me, an almost father.

## 18. Skin

Untold

### Chapter 18 - Skin

Summary: Set in between To Be Loved the Way You Love Me and Starlight, Star Bright. Hiccup might be a Hooligan by birth, but he sure feels like he's an Outcast some days.

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, so this idea has seriously been on my mind for a good long while, but I was never exactly sure how to go about it, and I knew there was no room for it in Starlight, Star Bright. When you look at the movie, it seems the adults were a bit more set in their ways than the kids were. For instance, the adults never took the time to listen to Hiccup, while the teens met him in the arena, knowing that he might be wrong about dragons and yet still taking the plunge to trust him anyway, even Snotlout. **\*\***

**\*\*Furthermore,** after SixxAM's "Skin", I knew I had to get this down on paper. I would've really liked to put some lyrics from the song into this story, but, unfortunately, it's been said before that song fics are now not allowed, as the lyrics are not the content of the author uploading their story. If you'd like to hear the song, it's a truly wonderful work and the moment I heard it my mind jumped to this AU. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I think even zoo exhibits had less people staring shamelessly at them than I did right then.<p>

Each step with my prosthetic was painful, but with so many eyes on

me, I tried not to let it show.

Another half a pace, and the teens whom I had met in what seemed like another lifetime ago fell into step beside me, all talking to me at once, so fast it made my head spin.

Astrid hung back a bit, watching my face every time I took a step with the prosthetic leg.

"Hey, man," Snotlout greeted me with a punch on the shoulder that left me slightly winded. "How you doing?"

"Okay, I guess," I mumbled, unsure whether he actually wanted an answer. It was the first time I'd been out of the house since the snowstorm and the attack with Alvin andâ€|everything. These kids had been reasonably nice to me once it became clear that I actually could help with the dragons, but stillâ€|

"You have to admit, that is one amazing battle scar." Tuffnut chimed in.

I felt the heat of a blush beginning to take over my cheeks; his words made me suddenly and intensely aware of each awkward step.

"I guess," I repeated quietly.

As they began going in the direction of the Great Hall for lunch, I realized I was slowing them down â€" badly. They had all noticeably slowed their pace to match mine, I suspect just so I wouldn't feel bad, but I felt like I had a great big neon sign above my head, glowing with the letters: "COME GAWK AT THE ONE-LEGGED FREAK".

As we reached the threshold of the Great Hall, the pain in my leg was beginning to build and I knew I didn't want them to see this. Instead of following them inside, I leaned a bit heavily against the stone wall and called, "Hey, guys, I'll catch you up, okay? I'll see you later."

I ran a hand down to my knee, where stump met wood, and I winced slightly as my fingers massaged the tender area. I think Tuffnut wanted to stick around and watch the show, just in case I took my prosthetic leg off or something, but Astrid began to herd them all inside without further ado.

At least until a voice stopped them.

"Ruffnut and Tuffnut Thorston!" A threatening-looking, pale-skinned, fair-haired Viking woman stood there, hands on her hips, a scowl twisting her face. Her long, pale blonde hair went nearly to her waist, leaving me in no doubt who she was. "Come right here this instant!"

"Momâ€" Ruffnut began.

"Butâ€" Tuffnut tried to protest.

"What'd they get in trouble for this time?" I asked.

"I don't know. They like to do yak-tipping a lot," Astrid shrugged, sweeping her braid around one shoulder.

"What have I told you?" she grabbed their wrists with one hand and gestured to me with the other. "What have I told you about him?" She began to drag them off, away from the Great Hall. "I told you, he's an Outcast, I don't want you hanging around him!"

"Mom, he's cool!" Tuffnut said indignantly, their voices growing fainter the farther away they got.

And, just like that, any little bit of happiness or self-confidence that I had gained after Alvin's attack vanished.

I bit my lip as I watched them go, a mixture of guilt and self-consciousness sitting in my stomach like a stone.

"That sounds like my parents," Snotlout commented thoughtfully. "My dad would kill me if he knew I was hanging out with you, Hiccup."

This unexpected news was quickly followed up by a pained yelp as Astrid stepped on Snotlout's foot.

"Why don't we go into the Great Hall?" she suggested in a falsely bright voice, shoving Snotlout in bodily before he could even answer.

Fishlegs followed without complaint; in all the excitement with the twins, he had taken out a book and was now walking while reading, a skill I had to admire.

Astrid leaned against the doorframe as Fishlegs and Snotlout wandered in to get a table. "Hiccup?" her voice was surprisingly gentle. "Are you coming?"

"I'll catch up." I said quietly. "I'll be there in a second."

Astrid clucked her tongue. "You can't"

"Astrid, I'll catch you up." The interruption was easy; the moment I started speaking, Astrid stopped. I turned away so I wouldn't have to look at her, staring up at the sky.

A few seconds later, the soft 'click' of the door sliding into place let me know that I was now alone.

\* \* \*

><p>"Alright, what's wrong?"<p>

"What do you mean?" I glanced up from the table, dropping my spoon.

"Something's wrong." Stoick announced from his place across from me. He took a sip from his mug and set it down before continuing. "You're being quiet; you just keep staring down at the table like you want to kill it; you're upset."

"I" I wasn't prepared for people who could tell my emotions just by studying my face. Alvin had never noticed anything was amiss with

me when I lived with him. "I'll be fine."

"Obviously, you're not, if something's bugging you this badly," he replied.

I traced a pattern in the tabletop with my finger. There was a second or two of silence in which I thought I might win this round, and then it just came tumbling out. "I don't belong on Berk."

Stoick's brow creased. "What?"

"I don't belong on Berk," I repeated. "I meanâ€¦" I glanced down at myself in embarrassment. "Look at me."

He studied me closely for a few seconds. "Explain."

"What?"

"What brought this up? Please explain that to me."

"Wellâ€¦" And then suddenly, I was spilling the whole story, Ruffnut and Tuffnut's mother, what Snotlout had said and why Mrs. Thorston regarded me as unfit material for a friend.

Stoick's eyes darkened. "Hiccupâ€¦"

"And it's true." I blurted, cutting right across him. But damn it, his words had cut open a lot of insecurities and I was just going to let them bleed for a couple seconds. "I'm not Berk material, I'm an Outcast!"

"Alrightâ€¦"

"It's just soâ€¦"

"Now will you listen?" he interrupted gently.

I instantly let my mouth drop closed. "Yes, sir."

"Number one, you're both wrong, you and Mrs. Thorston. You're not an Outcast â€" you're a Hooligan."

"Iâ€¦"

"Number two, just because you happen to come from an island of exiles doesn't automatically make you a bad person." he took a breath. "You taught me that one, actually. I know when I'm wrong, and I was wrong, then. But she's making the same mistake. I mean, think about it. Why did you come back to Berk when you could've gotten off scot-free?"

"Because I was tired of hiding." I responded instantly, but his eyes drew another answer from me as well. "And because I didn't believe you guys should have to go to war with the Outcasts because of me."

"And that's why you're not an Outcast," he replied. "Because you came back here, and you couldn't have missed the Outcast ships on our shores, but you came back here anyway. You came back here because you cared. And I know a lot of Outcasts who have never cared for anybody



but themselves. You're a Hooligan. Wear that title proudly, Hiccup  
" you deserve it."

I studied the tabletop for a long minute, unsure how to reply,  
unwilling to look at him. "I'm not." I managed, very quietly.  
"I'm not a Hooligan, I'm not."

"Don't let them make you feel that way," Stoick interrupted " not  
that I had any idea how to finish that sentence anyway. "I told you  
not to let Alvin make you feel like you were less than " don't let  
anybody do that, alright? You are not less than. You are \_equal\_. And  
you are not an Outcast. You're a Hooligan, by birth, by right.  
Okay?"

I couldn't look at him, even though by this point, he had risen from  
his seat and knelt down next to my chair. He took my scarred hand in  
his. I couldn't look at him; I could only study the scars of  
ownership Alvin had left all over my body.

"Look at me." And when I didn't "Hiccup, look at me. Don't be  
ashamed."

I reluctantly lifted my eyes to meet his. He brushed the hair back  
from my forehead. "You're perfect, Hiccup, \_perfect\_. Just the way  
you are."

## 19. Casualty

Untold

### Chapter 19 - Casualty

Summary: Growing up in a war means you'll see death.

\*\*A/N: I don't know why I was in such a heartbreaking mood tonight xP  
anyway, here's my newest thing, set back before To Be Loved the Way  
You Love Me, shortly after Alvin locks Hiccup up. This was inspired  
because I fell sick on Wednesday and have done next to nothing except  
rewatch old Riders of Berk episodes and bemoan how downhill the show  
has gone. When rewatching We are Family Part 2, I found a sudden urge  
to write something set on Outcast Island.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Growing up in a war means you'll see death. I grew up in the  
midst of several wars, so I had known that there were  
casualties.<p>

There had to be casualties, my father insisted. There always had to  
be. \_Always.\_

I grew up thinking things like that. But by the time I grew older, I  
had begun to question so many of my village's beliefs, I'm sure that  
one wasn't far down on my list to question next.

All my questions and ideas did nothing; I only talked my way into a  
cell sooner rather than later.

I could've avoided it until I was as old as sixteen to eighteen, but

I wasn't one to keep my questions or opinions to myself. Especially when somebody spoke out against them.

So I sat there in an Outcast cell, unable to comprehend what I was doing here. My own father had put me here. How was that for a harsh parent?

The kid in the cell beside mine was bloody and bruised, but under the injuries, I could tell he wasn't from our tribe. His bloodstained garments were not the makeshift rags the Outcasts sported; the royal blue and gold colors were the kinds we'd be lucky to get our hands on.

I watched him as he stared down at his chains, doing the same thing I felt like doing: sniffing and crying like a baby.

I pulled my knees up to my chest; maybe his tribe wasn't as forceful on the rule, "crying makes you weak". Even if it didn't, crying was useless, I told myself.

It didn't solve anything. It wouldn't get me out of this cell. It wouldn'tâ€”

I gave up and the sobs left my throat. I put my head on my knees, my shoulders shaking as I tried to pretend I was five years old.

It was easier to pretend, anyway.

Was I another casualty in my father's war with the world? Or would I simply be in this cell forever, forced to stay because of all my questions?

Neither me nor the other boy so much as spoke to the other; we exchanged glances and we both cried, but neither of us said anything to the other.

When Savage came in ten minutes later, stopping in front of our cells, the boy gave a gasp of fear and I knew why. The names on this island were scarily accurate, and Savage was certainly no exception.

He unlocked the boy's restraints, handing him off to a guard, letting the other man push him along before turning his attention to me. I pressed myself up against the wall of my cell, wishing I could sink into the floor.

He sneered when he saw the tear tracks on my face. "The little baby's been crying, then?"

I dropped my gaze to his grimy boots, letting my hair drop in front of my face to shield it. If I started crying again, I didn't want him to know.

I peeked up once as he drew closer, and that was to see him raising his sword above me. I winced, anticipating the blow.

\* \* \*

><p>The young boy was back in his cell. I had barely noticed them bringing him back over the sound of my own piercing screams.<p>

When I was sure the guards weren't listening, I leaned up on my hands and whispered, "Are you alright?"

He didn't respond, look up, or even twitch.

"What did they do to you?" My horrified whisper slipped out before I could stop myself.

Maybe he hadn't heard me. Maybe he was deaf. Maybe he didn't want to talk about it.

"Okay." I spoke into the silence once more. "That's okay. You don't have to talk. I hope you feel better in the morning." Because anybody trapped in a cell on Outcast Island deserved a better life than this.

I was about to turn away when I noticed the most terrifying thing about this night: \_he wasn't breathing. \_

My hands shook on the thin metal bars separating us. "Noâ€|"

This boy had been killed. I didn't even know his name. This boy wasâ€|wasâ€|he wasâ€|he was eerily still.

He had been yet another brutal casualty in my father's war.

Because "there must always, always be casualties, Hiccup. Always".

## 20. Hurt and Heal

Untold

Chapter 20 - Hurt and Heal

Summary: None

\*\*A/N: So, here it is! The twentieth chapter AND the first one in which Hiccup opens up a bit more to Stoick. What do you think?  
\*\*

\*\*I've been wanting to write something in this vein for awhile. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Do you think they'll fit?" Stoick asked, watching me examine the fabric with my mouth slightly open. "You're a bit smaller than most Vikings and I'm not sure I got the measurements correctâ€|I know the colors are a bit offâ€|" his voice trailed off, but the uncertainty in his tone hung in the air.<p>

All I could do was stare at the thin cotton garments, silently marveling at the fact that he had actually taken time out of his day and thought of me and taken time to make things easier for me, to do something for me. A kind of warm feeling spread through me when I realized he really didn't know if I was going to like it or not. I thought that he knew me better than that, but the hesitation written in his gaze clearly said otherwise.

"So, do you like it?"

I hesitated a second before answering his question. Yes, I liked the new clothes. But more than that, it was the idea that somebody had done something for me. And not because they had to, or because they felt obligated to, but because they actually cared. Stoick didn't benefit from these new clothes at all. In fact, it had probably taken a lot of time and energy to make these clothes, and yet he had. He had taken the time and thought to actually look at me and mentally measure the clothes against me, he had actually thought of me while making these.

I ran a hand over the thin sleeve of the tunic again; like the ragged green one I was wearing at the moment, the sleeves of the new one would go down to my wrists when I had it on. I felt the fabric between my fingers and instantly recognized that he hadn't just modeled it after my tunic, he had taken the time to make this one thicker.

The clothing spoke more clearly of Berk than anything I thought I would ever own, and for a moment, all I could do was stare at it before realizing I hadn't yet answered Stoick's question.

"Oh, umâ€¦" I stared down at the clothing again. "Yeah, I do. I, uhâ€¦" I dropped my gaze to the wooden floor, scuffing my boot against it. "Thanks, Stoick. This, umâ€¦" I struggled to find a way to say it without sounding like an idiot. "This means a lot to me." Needless to say, I failed.

"Next time you need something from me," his hand found my shoulder, surprising me so much that I looked up at him, "don't hesitate to ask, alright?"

I nodded slightly, still trying to get over the shock and surprise of this unexpected gift.

"Would you like to try it on?" he added hopefully, gesturing to the clothing. "Just to check and see if everything fits? I'll be happy to rework it if something is too bigâ€¦"

I nodded, secretly glad that he was offering to give me a chance to escape the awkward spell that had suddenly fallen on us. I gently took the clothing from his hands and started up the stairs. Say what you want â€" I don't get dressed in front of other people for any reason.

As Vikings, it wasn't like we treasured modesty or anything, but it was important to me that no one ever see some of the scars Alvin had left on my body. They had been put there to signify ownership, and I was sure in many people's eyes, that's what they would mean to them.

I reached my bedroom, pushed the door open, and slammed it shut behind me as my gaze returned to the clothes.

The tunic was rust-red and clean-looking, the simple cotton sleeves without even a speck of lint, dirt, or bloodstains. Compared to my old green one, which was more like a giant, ragged fuzz ball than an actual garment, it was pretty sad.

The leggings were dark brown and had no holes; the belt that it came with was a cool, misty yellow.

I pulled my boot off slowly, fingering the clothing. In style, it wasn't that much different from mine, but the careful workmanship was what set them apart. While my green tunic had uneven, crooked stitches and the sleeves did little to keep the harsh wintry air out, the sleeves of the red one were thick enough to ensure shelter from the cold wind and the stitches were perfect and even, made with care and precision.

He had sat up for who knows how long some nights sewing this for me. Again, I was taken aback by how much he seemed to care. I slid the leggings on, but I was forced to stop and untangle the hem from the edge of my prosthetic as it caught around the metal contraption.

I undid my vest and tunic as I heard a light tap on the door. Before I could respond not to come in, the door opened.

"Are youâ€"?" Stoick stopped when he saw me standing there. He didn't say anything after that, and the silence was pretty awkward, so I decided to break it myself.

"Um, Iâ€|uhâ€|the leggings fit."

And then I winced at how awkward I sounded.

"Oh, that's good." Stoick responded quietly, as if he was coming out of a reverie. "Did that?" he pointed to the red tunic that lay on the bed behind me.

"I haven't gotten to try it yet." I responded. "I'llâ€|umâ€|yeah." I hesitantly leaned over and took the tunic from where it lay on the bed, glancing at Stoick out of the corner of my eye.

His gaze roved over my body in a worried, almost horrified way as he watched me.

"Areâ€|you okay?" I asked uncertainly, his expression beginning to worry me as well.

He took a breath. "I'mâ€|" and then, abruptly, he stopped himself again. "Yes, I'm fine."

"You're what?" I prodded, my fingers finding the tunic and yanking it up to my chest.

"Iâ€|" Stoick took another long breath, but this time it was like he was gearing up instead of shutting down. "Sometimes, I forgetâ€|" he managed in a slightly shaking voice, "â€|that Alvin hurt you so badly. I forget how much I've missed. How many times I wasn't there."

"It's not your fault you weren't there," I mumbled awkwardly, wishing I had just put the stupid tunic on without asking questions. "You didn't even know I was alive."

"I know that," Stoick responded gently. "But when I did know you were alive? I couldn't help what I didn't do, what I didn't knowâ€|but

what I did do, what I did knowâ€¦that's what kills me." He crossed the room easily, kneeling down beside me so we were eye-to-eye. The serious look in his eyes made me uncomfortable. "I'm so sorry."

"For what?" I whispered. "What do you mean?"

"I can'tâ€¦Iâ€¦the thing that kills me about seeing all thisâ€¦" he paused here to gesture to my torso. "â€¦is the fact that there is a scar from me mixed in. I'm angry with Alvin, I apologize for how badly he's hurt you, but more importantly, I'm angry with myself. I should apologize for myself."

"Whatâ€¦?"

He gently took my hand in his, turning it over, revealing the scar spelling out 'traitor', caught in the act of healing. The scar I tried my hardest not to think about. The scar I tried to keep hidden, right along with the others. "I hurt you, too," he whispered. "Just as badly as he did."

"You're nothing like himâ€¦" I began.

"But I hurt you." Stoick repeated sadly. "And for as long as that scar lasts, I will hate myself and I will never forgive myself. For as long as that scar lasts, I will try to make it up to you. If you ever think about what I did to you, I will not blame you for hating me. By some miracle, you have accepted my apology. Maybe, one day, an apology won't be enough. One day, you might hate me for what I've done. But I hope that on that dayâ€¦I hope to Asgard and back that you will remember that I love you."

He ran a finger over my wrist.

"Alvin may have hurt you, he may have hurt my little boy, but I have done the same thing, time and again and the best I can hope for is that I can one day stop. Maybe one day, I'll stop hurting you and finally make you happy."

"Stoick, it'sâ€¦"

"Don't say it," he interrupted, this time almost angrily. "Don't you dare try and say that it's okay. You and I both know it's not. It's nowhere near."

"You do make me happy." I admitted, dropping my gaze to the scar he'd left. "Before I came here, I don't remember ever smiling so much, ever laughing so much, ever having so much fun. You're the closest thing I've ever come to a family and Stoick, I'm sorry, but I'll be damned if I let you go just because of a few mistakes. If you don't want me, that's one thing, and that's fine. But if you do still accept me, well, thenâ€¦for as long as you accept me, I accept you. There was never any doubt about that one, Stoick."

"Iâ€¦"

"And I don't care what you try to say about it, it really is okay now. It wasn't at the time. Youâ€¦" I dropped my gaze to the floor so I wouldn't have to look at him. "At the time, you scared me. You hurt me. But I'm alright now and you've more than made up for it every day since. You're one of the best things that ever happened to me. Please

don't think you're the worst."

Stoick stared down at me for a second in surprise. "Youâ€|you truly mean that?" The look in his eyes was so genuine.

I nodded slowly.

He traced a finger over my cheek. "I'll make it up to you, I swear."

"You're missing the point." I put my hand over his; his palm dwarfed mine greatly. "You think it's a matter of making it up to me, but you already have made it up to me a hundred times over. And I have no doubt that you'll keep doing that."

"You have to know this." he insisted gently, disregarding my last sentence. "You have to know that my biggest regret in life is hurting you."

"But you didn't just hurt me." I whispered, sinking to my knees as well, letting him carefully wrap an arm around me, like he found me indescribably breakable. "You healed me, too."

## 21. Thunderstorm

Untold

Chapter 21 - Thunderstorm

Summary: Hiccup doesn't like storms.

\*\*A/N: Well, here you go! 3,000 words! Hope you enjoy :D This idea was given to me by RazzlePazzleDooDot. We got into a discussion about whether or not this AU Hiccup likes storms.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>When I awoke, it was storming. Not the gentle, drizzly rain that turned the sky a bit gray; a fully-fledged thunderstorm with a heavy downpour and bright white forks of lightning that practically lit up the sky. The howling wind alone could've shaken the hut right down to its foundations.<p>

I knew I would be getting no more sleep from the moment I opened my eyes.

I reached out a hand, hoping to relax myself by stroking Toothless' scales, but my fingers met only the cold hardwood of the floor. The feel of the floor beneath my fingers forced me to remember the last storm like this: Toothless pulling against his chains, whimpering in the back of his throat as his desire to be free was made known.

Toothless loved rain. He loved the sights and sounds and smells of a thunderstorm, yelping with excitement every time there was a particularly loud clap of thunder, dancing around and trying to guess when the next strike of lightning would be. The louder and fiercer the storm, the heavier the rain, the brighter and scarier the lightning, the better it was, at least in Toothless' head.

The last time there had been a storm like this, I had lain shuddering in my cell, my arms over my head, trying not to hear the loud booms and claps of thunder overhead. I did much the same thing now, yanking the blanket over my head, shuddering beneath the blankets.

I could almost hear Toothless' shrill, excited yelps as he frolicked in the rain, large pink tongue dangling out, catching stray drops. Of course the wind and rain and thunder were much too loud for me to even hope to hear him until they abated, but I knew, if I could, that's what I would hear.

Another flash of lightning illuminated the world outside my little blanket, burning orange in front of my tightly closed eyes.

I hated, just hated, storms. I didn't like admitting it, or other people knowing I didn't like them â€" too much risk of them using things like that against me in the future, I thought â€" but that couldn't be helped sometimes.

And it wasn't like I was scared of them, I comforted myself, as another boom shook the hut, causing me to jump. My heart sped up slightly and I tightened my trembling grip on the blanket.

I simply detested the loud, distracting booms, the howling gusts of wind, the often freezing rain and the lightning. Oh, the lightning. Now that really was the worst part of a storm. It just seemed so big and angry, a storm did, and each flash of lightning was a reminder, at least to me, of how very small I was, how small and vulnerable and helpless.

And if there was one thing I hated, it was feeling helpless.

Every time a storm had occurred on Outcast Island, I remembered running as fast and far as I could in the forest, trying to beat the fat, cold raindrops and the loud booms of thunder sure to come. Sometimes, I made it and sometimes I didn't, but they both had the same result whenever I got back: to run into my house and bury myself under the covers on my bed, shuddering every time lightning flashed across the sky. Sometimes, I would even cry if the storm were particularly bad; that was how afraid of them I used to be.

I was stronger, now, though, I assured myself silently, rolling over, making sure to take the blanket with me. And I was not scared.

\* \* \*

><p>It was the first time I would ever try to escape from Outcast Island, but it certainly wasn't the last. The night started with hope, and a possibility of escape; so why did it end in sadness and hopelessness and fear?<p>

It had been completely dark in my cell, that much I remembered. The only illumination I received was the occasional flashes of lightning from my tiny, barred window, too high above my head to see out of at the time, too far up to offer me any hope of escape.

Besides, it wasn't like I was stupid enough to try and repeat my actions from earlier tonight, after such a harsh punishment for them.



Things had actually started out okay for Toothless and I, but when the storm hit is when things started going nightmarishly wrong.

We had escaped from our cells quietly; we had made it out of the dungeons and onto the end of the island, where sand met ocean with no one's knowledge. We were practically invisible against the night sky, especially a starless night like this, with dark, heavy clouds moving in. There was no moon.

We exchanged excited glances and Toothless settled down for a second, but only for a second, and that second was all I needed to climb up on his back and turn my attention to the sky. I could feel the static in the air, hear the distant rumbles of thunder, and my grip on his reins tightened slightly. I was twelve years old, and I knew I should be a man. And besides, I had come this far. It was too late to reschedule, to wait to do it another day. It was now or never. We might not be so lucky if we waited until next time.

My gut lurched as he began running along the sand, kicking up dust and gathering speed as the thunder grew louder and louder, as the clouds burst open and he threw himself up into the sky.

We made it barely three feet off the island before the rain started, before the lightning flashed, hit his tail, and sent us plunging back to the ground. I sat up, spitting out a mouthful of sand and staring down at his prosthetic tail, now hopelessly burned beyond repair. The escape attempt had been a failure.

Another round of thunder, and I shuddered, hiding my face in my knees for a few seconds so I didn't have to look at the sky, or Toothless, or anything. So I could just shut the world out for a few precious seconds and pretend to be alright. And then I raised my head again, once the thunder had passed and quieted, and I stroked his head comfortingly, although I wanted to be comforted too, right then. But it was my failure, and I had to fix it. My screw-up. My repair. "We can swim." I whispered. "If we swam fast, we could make it away from here before the storm even clears. Before it's even half over."

But this was not likely, and we both knew it. I wasn't a strong swimmer at the best of times, and, although Toothless was strong enough for both of us, eventually he would give in, too. The makeshift tail I had created from the odds and ends I had picked up when I could risk sneaking out, or sweet-talk/confuse (mostly confuse) one of the guards into letting me out wouldn't have gotten us very far anyway.

I stared miserably down at the burnt, soaked metal substitutes. No, they wouldn't have gotten us very far. And his tail was a lightning magnet as is. I should have thought of that. I pulled my knees up to my chest as I watched another strike of lightning flash across the sky. "We'd never have made it anyway," I whispered to the lonely, black night. "C'mon, Toothless. It's time for us to think of something new."

I rose to my feet and brushed myself off, wrapping my arms around myself to lock in as much body heat as possible — not easy when I was drenched from the freezing rain. I pushed myself forward, already relaying the newest plan to Toothless, waiting for him to give me his input on it. I had already come up with several plans over the weeks

and he'd either shot them down or approved them, at least until one of us found a (usually gaping) hole in it.

"Alright," I whispered confidentially, "we'll hide out, I guess, in the forest. Let's go back to the cove. I guess we'll just lay low until the storm abates, let Alvin think we're too far gone to catch and thenâ€”"

But I was cut off by the sound of a cracking twig, coming from the direction of the forest I spoke of right then. I stopped walking instantly, flinging out an arm to stop Toothless, too, but this wasn't really necessary; he had stopped the instant I had.

We dropped to the ground instantly, Toothless picking me up, shielding me with his wings to quiet the sound of my shudders from the cold and the storm and to hopefully shield me from view from any person. If he closed his eyes right then, he'd be practically invisible.

Maybe it was just an animal, I thought to myself as I tried to calm my panicked, racing heart. It was an animal, or the effect of the wind and rain on a branchâ€”!

I clung tightly to Toothless, listening hard through his wings for any other sounds, but it was hopeless; his thick, warm scales blocked out any sound instantly.

So I just shut my eyes and prayed that someone or something would get us out of this, or get Toothless out of this, at the very least. He didn't deserve this. He had been dragged into this by me.

There were a few loud, panicked yells and Toothless tightened his grip on me anxiously, worried moans making their way out of his throat as he nuzzled the top of my head. I tightened my own grip on him, trying to meet his eye, but he wasn't looking at me as he slowly raised his head. Low growls made their way out of his throat for a few seconds and my anxiety only increased.

Then Toothless' wings vanished from around me, and my only warmth and protection was gone. I blinked open my eyes just seconds before a hand grabbed me by the collar, hauling me right back to where I came from. I gave a panicked glance around for Toothless, watching several Outcasts beating him into submission. The sight of them punching and kicking my dragon was enough. "Leave him alone!" I commanded, struggling to break free from whoever held me. "Just leave him alone!"

I felt a fierce blow to the back of the head and a rough Outcast voice telling me to shut up. The burning pain and the spots of color bursting before my eyes forced me onto my knees, but the Outcast holding me didn't seem to care; he insisted on continuing to drag me along. No matter what he had to do to get me back into my cell, it was clear that that was what he was going to do.

I was dragged helplessly along, away from Toothless, away from the raging storm and back into the dingy little cell that now served as my home. I stared miserably around at the stone walls, only halfheartedly trying to resist the shackles the man began fastening securely around my wrists.

When he left the room, it was with these solemn words: "Alvin will be here shortly, runt. Sit tight."

The metal door slammed shut, leaving me in darkness.

He hadn't been lying about "shortly"; within just a few minutes, the door had opened again and Alvin was standing there, one hand fingering the hilt of his sword, the other slamming the heavy door shut behind him. "How did you do it?" he spat, taking a step closer to me as the door slammed shut all the way, plunging us into pitch black.

"Iâ€¦what?"

"How did you escape?"

"Why should I tell y-you?" My fear was given away by my stammer.

He took another few steps forward, bridging the gap between us easily and taking out his sword, holding it close to my throat. "Start talking."

"Iâ€¦"

He pressed it down, hard. "I'm waiting."

"Iâ€¦it was easy," I managed. "The guards would let me out if I convinced them, or if I tricked them. I picked the lock on my handcuffs. That part was really easy."

"What else?" The blade was now so close to my throat that I could barely speak.

"Scrap metal," I choked. "For Toothless' tail. I picked it up from around the forge."

"How long were you planning this?"

"A few weeks."

He swore quietly under his breath, drawing his sword back. I let out a breath of relief, my limbs trembling from the adrenaline and fear of the night.

As if to underline that he wasn't finished with me, however, he kicked me in the ribs, causing me to crumple at his feet, gripping my side tightly. "Did you really think you could get away from me?" he snarled, landing another painful kick. "Did you really think you could escape me that easily?"

"You're hurting me," I whispered painfully, but he didn't hear.

"You are never getting away from me," he sneered. "I own you."

"I'm a person, not an object!" I began indignantly, but he silenced me with a slap on the face.

"Shut up," he snarled. "Just \_shut up\_. You're not escaping from me, is that clear? Any more attempts like this and you will \_regret it\_."

I scowled. "I'm not scaredâ€œ"

"Liar." he sneered, landing another kick before drawing his sword and kneeling down next to me, looking at me almost thoughtfully. "Now, let me see," he began in a leisurely way, letting the blade tickle my neck before shooting up to my cheek, down to my side, back up to my forehead. "Where do I want your newest scar to be?"

My flinch gave me away, and he chuckled.

By the end of the night, his rage was gone and so was my defiance.

"Never forget it," he snarled. "Never, ever. I own you."

"Please," I choked. "Please, no more. You'reâ€œ|you're h-hurting me."

"What did you think was my intention, you fool?" he demanded, his harsh voice cruelly amused. "You're an even bigger weakling than I thought. Can't even withstand a decent beating."

I closed my eyes against his words, but I knew he was right. A stronger man than I would have just kept silent. "No more," I blurted, unable to keep calm when the thought of the torture that was sure to come loomed over me. "Please, no more."

"Then control your tongue and your temper."

"I promise." I managed.

"Stop resisting."

"I'll stop." I whimpered.

"I own you."

"Youâ€œ|youâ€œ|" the words were foul on my tongue, but I managed to spit them out. "You own me."

\* \* \*

><p>I sat straight up in bed, panic sitting in my stomach like a stone. In the darkness, Stoick's spare bedroom could've been an Outcast cell. I let out a piercing, high-pitched scream, expecting Alvin to be upon me at any moment, expecting anything to come out of the shadows from where it lurked. Tears welled up in my eyes as the storm only seemed to grow louder, the very universe amused by my pitiful attempts at survival.<p>

I whimpered, drawing the blanket up closer beside me before I heard a creak on the stairs and I shuddered again. Someone was coming to get me, to shut me up for being so loud. I instantly lay down again, rolling over, trying to pretend to be asleep.

The door flew open and Stoick walked in, the floorboards creaking loudly as he stepped in all the weak places, making his loud, heavy way over to me. "Hiccup, Hiccup, what's wrong? Are you alright?"

I shrank down slightly under the covers, but it seemed rude not to answer him now, so I opened my mouth to tell him, yeah, sorry, I'm fine, but what came out was, "I'm s-scared."

"What?" he sat down on the edge of the bed and scooted closer to me. "Did something happen, Hiccup? What are you scared of?"

I was shaking as I released my grip on the blanket, groping around for his hand in the darkness. "I don't like storms."

"Oh, Hiccupâ€|"

"Alvin h-hurt me during one of them."

"Oh, sonâ€"

"Andâ€|and I tr-trying to escape from Outcast Islandâ€|" \_That's funny. I don't remember letting those tears fall. Normally I'm better at holding them back. \_"â€|And he b-beat me for it. He told me, 'I-I own y-you.'"

The dam broke, the tears began falling faster, and I squeezed his large hand with both of mine. He pulled me up into a hug, listening to me sob for a few minutes.

"I'mâ€|I'm scared, Daddy," I whimpered, clinging to him like a child. "I don't like storms."

"I know."

"They're scary."

"I know." His warm, soothing hand on my back was warm and comforting and solid; I wanted to stay like this all night.

I wiped my nose on my sleeve, trying to stem the flow of tears, knowing I wouldn't be able to. "Alvin liked to h-hurt me during storms."

"I'm sorry, Hiccup. I'm so sorry."

"Don't let him hurt me, okay?"

"Never. I'm right here for you, okay?"

I nodded. "Okay."

There was silence for a while.

"Don'tâ€|" I hesitated before saying it. "Don't leave me alone, okay?"

"C'mon." he whispered, taking my hand and gently tugging me up off the bed. "Why don't you come sleep in my bed? Would you like that? That way, you don't have to be alone."

The idea did sound nice. I realized I would like that. I nodded shakily, and he helped me all the way downstairs, even though I didn't even need help.

He waited until I was safely on one side of the bed before crawling onto the other side, taking my hand, and giving it a squeeze. "You're alright, Hiccup. You're safe. No one's gonna hurt you."

"Storms are scary." I whispered in a small voice.

"But you're okay. If you need me, I'll be right here, okay?" He drew me into a tight hug, letting me rest against his chest. I buried my face in his beard and shirt for a few seconds as he hugged me. "You're alright. No one's ever gonna hurt you again, alright?"

The storm outside seemed to drop a bit as I replied. "Okay."

Maybe this storm wasn't so scary after all.

## 22. Thunderstorm Part II

Untold

### Chapter 22 - Thunderstorm Part II

Summary: Part of chapter 21, 'Thunderstorm' from Stoick's POV. Please don't ask how or why.

\* \* \*

><p>Storms did not scare me.<p>

They were a bit of an inconvenience, seeing as all they did was hinder work and sleep, and, sometimes, if the lightning was particularly bad, make people question if Thor was angry at us. If the storm broke before daybreak, we knew he wasn't.

For the last thirty years, every nighttime storm we'd had remained in the darkness of nighttime. No storm had even come close to continuing on during the daylight hours. Storms did not scare me. The idea that Thor might be angry with my people was unsettling, but I wasn't quite as superstitious about these things as some of the villagers were.

So, when the thunder and lightning started up that night, I lay in bed wishing I could sleep, but I lay there quite calmly, and I was not afraid.

But something happened that night to make me afraid, although it wasn't the lightning or the thunder. It was a high, piercing, terrified scream, a boy's scream. Hiccup's scream.

I thought my heart was going to stop as it pierced my ears, plainly terrified. I couldn't remember a time when he had ever sounded more scared. I threw back the blanket and rushed up the creaky wooden stairs, my footsteps and pounding heart temporarily blocking out the thunder. All I could hear was the blood pumping in my ears, which were still ringing in the aftermath of hearing Hiccup scream.

He had to be okay. He had to be okay. I pushed the door open, expecting to see something, perhaps the figure of an Outcast holding a sword to Hiccup's throat, but when I entered the room, all was still. Hiccup was in his bed, the covers pulled up to his chin,

facing the wall so I couldn't see his expression. Like the scream had never happened.

The utter calmness left to the room left me standing there, feeling rather foolish. Had it been a dream, that yell of utter terror I'd heard? No, it couldn't have been "that was Gobber who had the wild imagination, not me.

And, in fact, the longer I stood there, caught between asking Hiccup what was wrong and simply going back downstairs so I didn't wake him, I realized his breathing was hitching ever so slightly, like he was trying to quell sobs, or maybe a rising panic attack.

"Hiccup? Hiccup, what's wrong? Are you alright?" I whispered. The floor creaked under my weight as I neared the bed, seating myself on the edge.

Hiccup shuddered slightly beneath his covers. I expected him to tell me he was alright; there had been many a night when he'd woken both of us up from a terrible nightmare and tried to brush it off. I was so prepared for the voice of the tough teenager I had come to know and love that the small voice of the little boy I had never known nearly broke my heart. "I'm s-scared," he whimpered.

"What?" \_It had to have been a nightmare. What else could make him wake up screaming? \_"Did something happen, Hiccup? What are you scared of?" Maybe if I asked him, he'd finally tell me the truth about his bad dreams. He always tries to pretend they're not as bad as they seem, but when he's crying in the middle of the night, he doesn't put up a very good defense.

I expected him to try to brush me off again, but what came out of his mouth was unexpected. "I don't like storms."

As another boom of thunder shook the house, I saw him shudder slightly and in that moment, I hated storms, too. I hated everything that had ever made the boy in front of me afraid.

"Oh, Hiccup." I managed softly, because how exactly do you tell somebody who might not even be in their head, judging by the small, scared voice he was using, how do you tell somebody like that that you're there when they're not?

"Alvin h-hurt me during one of them." he whispered, sitting up so he could look at me. I felt hatred rising in my throat like bile, searing in my veins like I had a fully-fledged fire running through me. I bet that if any Outcasts had walked in right then, I could've killed them on the spot, no questions asked. If it had been Alvin, I would have even enjoyed it.

But again, how do you tell somebody like him that they're safe now? He never believed me anyway.

"Oh, son" I began, but he interrupted me.

"And, and I tr-ried to escape from Outcast Island," he managed, his voice thick with what I assumed to be tears. When another flash of lightning lit up the room, I was rewarded by the sight of his red, splotchy face as he tried in vain to stem the flow. "And he b-beat me for it," he continued tearfully. "He told me 'I-I own y-you.'" he

sniffed and wiped at his eyes; I heard sleeves rustling against skin in the pitch dark.

Again, the rage that made my blood boil and my stomach clench. I wanted to kill Alvin. I wanted to hurt him one hundred times over, once for every time he had hurt my little boy. And then I wanted to kill him, and dig him up, and kill him again, and keep killing him until he'd been murdered for as many tears as he had made Hiccup shed. For as many times as Hiccup had cried because of this man's cruelty, I wanted to let him know what pain really meant.

Hiccup's sobs pulled me out of my reverie; I felt him gripping my hand with both of his tiny ones in the darkness, and I caught a flash of his face as the clouds parted for a brief minute; perhaps this storm would break sooner than I'd thought. I only felt the barest hint of surprise when Hiccup hugged me as tightly as he could, and I didn't hesitate to pull him into my lap and hug him. The rage wasn't gone, no, not by a long shot, but it was now temporarily replaced with tenderness. I had to be a father first, and only then could I be a fighter.

"I'mâ€"I'm scared, Daddy," he choked, his grip on my shirt tightening. He released my clothes and flung his arms around my neck, crying into my shoulder. His entire, small body trembled under the effort of so many tears. My surprise at the unexpected nickname lasted only a moment and that was all it took for me to instinctively respond to the poor, sobbing boy in my arms. How could Alvin have hurt him like this? How could anyone, ever, have hurt my beautiful boy in this way, this way that has left him sobbing his heart out in my arms, utterly broken?

"I don't like storms," he whimpered.

"I know." I whispered, smoothing his hair and whispering soothing nothings, because it seemed to be the only thing I could do. I never wanted to let him go, but I knew I would one day have to release my grip on him.

"They're scary." he mumbled into my shoulder, but his sobs were beginning to ease and the flow of tears was definitely slowing. My shoulder was soaked from his crying, but I didn't care one bit. Let him cry. He mattered so much more than clothing. Clothing would dry. But his tears might not.

"I know." I repeated gently.

"Alvin liked to h-hurt me during storms," Hiccup stammered brokenly, and again that flash of rage, but this time, it left me feeling oddly empty. I could do nothing to Alvin tonight. I could do nothing right now, but the helplessness hadn't even begun to take me over when I registered how broken he sounded, how defenseless and scared he must be feeling.

"I'm sorry, Hiccup," I whispered, rubbing his back, because I truly was sorry and I truly could do nothing about it. "I'm so sorry."

"Don't let him hurt me, okay?" His small arms were trembling around my neck.



"Never." And that was a promise I intended to keep. "I'm right here for you, okay?"

I felt him nodding into my chest. "Okay."

"Don'tâ€¦|don't leave me alone, okay?" he whispered, and that's when I got an idea. I didn't want to leave him alone, he was afraid of storms and clearly didn't wish to be left alone, so I gently pulled him to his feet as I stood, too.

"C'mon. Why don't you come sleep in my bed? Would you like that?" I whispered. "That way, you don't have to be alone."

He nodded again, and I put a hand on his shoulder, gently guiding him downstairs until he was safely in my bed, shuddering every time another strike of lightning or boom of thunder went off outside the window.

I got onto my own side of the bed, and gripped Hiccup's tiny hand in mine; his little fingers shook. "You're alright, Hiccup. You're safe. No one's gonna hurt you."

"Storms are scary." he whispered.

"But you're okay." I insisted. "If you need me, I'll be right here, okay?"

Before he could make a protest, I gently tugged him into my arms, stroking his hair, loving him and feeling guilty for him and pitying him, all in one dark moment.

"You're alright. No one's ever gonna hurt you again, alright?" I squeezed his hand again as he curled up next to me, resting his head on my arm; I barely even recognized the weight.

"Okay." he whispered back, his tiny voice still trembling, still making him sound like a scared little five-year-old.

I expected him to lay awake for hours, but, in fact, it wasn't long before his rigid, trembling posture gave way to the gentle relaxation of sleep. His deep, even breathing calmed me more than anything else had that night.

I smoothed down his hair, listening to him breathe, thinking about Alvin and Outcast Island and how much I almost, in some sick and twisted way, wanted Alvin to attack again, just so I could have an excuse. So I could go at him with all my weapons, and so nobody would stop me. So I could make him pay for what he had put Hiccup through for years.

The memory of his small, trembling voice broke something inside my heart, leaving with nothing but a hollow sort of emptiness.

"\_Alvin h-hurt me during storms." \_

I lay there in the dark, hating Alvin and loving the boy in my arms, loving him with everything I had, because he was just so utterly whole and perfect and alive and did it matter how many scars he came with? We could work through those scars. We would get through this storm and, little by little, we would get through his scars as well,

each and every one, until the only ones that remained were the ones on his body.

## 23. I'm With You Part I

Untold

### Chapter 23 - I'm With You Part I

Summary: An idea given to me by a reviewer. What if Alvin had taken Hiccup up on the offer of going back to Outcast Island for the sake of Berk?

**\*\*A/N: SO! This idea was given to me by a reviewer who actually thought this was the direction the original story was going to take. I was worried that might make the whole story harder to pull off, so I discarded the idea, but ah, well, here's a little what if! So, this chapter is dedicated to hiccup, for their idea and endlessly kind reviews full of praise! \*\***

\* \* \*

><p>"Wait." My voice was weak and barely audible, my throat dry from how hard Savage had been pressing on it. I swallowed and repeated myself. "Wait!"<p>

My cry pierced the air this time, loud and clear, drawing everyone's attention.

Savage raised his sword higher, jerking me back by a lock of hair, causing me to cry out in pain. "Shut up, you," he hissed menacingly in my ear.

"Oh, no, it's alright, Savage," Alvin said. "Let the boy speak, why don't we?"

Savage gave a growl of dissatisfaction, but he released me. I reached up to rub at my stinging head before realizing that Stoick was staring at me. I dropped my hand quickly, standing up to face Alvin. "Don't kill him, Alvin."

I tried to face him with as little fear as possible, but underneath his cold stare, it was hard to stop my knees from shaking. My legs felt like they wouldn't support me as he turned to look back at Stoick. Surprisingly, he chuckled. "And who's going to stop me?"

"I can sure as hell try." The words fell out of my mouth before I even knew what I was saying.

"Hiccup, Hiccup, Hiccup," Alvin chuckled, shaking his head. "I've missed your reckless idiocy. Do come to Outcast Island so I may appreciate it more."

My heart thudded in my chest. His words had just opened a door of possibilities. There were things I could do, things I could say, right now, in this moment, that could save Stoick's life.

And, because Alvin's right about how I'm reckless and an idiot, I took that chance.

"Okay." I said quietly. "I'll go." Oh, how I hoped my voice wasn't shaking.

Alvin smiled grimly. "Say it a little louder, boy â€" I don't think they can hear you."

"I'll go with you!" I said loudly, angrily, staring up at him. Really, the only thing I was doing by that point was wordlessly begging him to go with it. "But only if you leave the people of Berk in peace. Forever. I will never try to escape you. I will never resist you. But I'll only do that if you promise not to harm anybody on this island â€" and that includes Toothless."

"Aww," Alvin chuckled. "So you are attached to this island, aren't you? Funny, I thought you might be â€" it just seemed to take forever to get you to leave."

I could feel an ashamed blush creeping up my face as I studied each little grain of sand. I found I just couldn't look at anybody quite yet.

"Although, by the looks of it," he added quietly, "they've already decided to throw out the unwanted runt." He gently fingered the scar on my wrist. I shuddered at his touch, repulsed. "That's why you're better off with me." He continued gently, running his fingers along the scar again. I wanted to yank my hand away so badly, but I stood there, shaky and frozen, and I didn't dare. "At least with us, we wanted you. You're coming home, Hiccup. You're wanted back home."

Alvin patted my head in what I guess you could call a soothing way, but I shrank back in disgust. I loathed this man, and his touch.

The axe wielder met Alvin's eyes, gave the slightest of nods, and, before anybody else could so much as move â€" not that anyone seemed really inclined to â€" he grabbed Stoick again, holding the axe inches from his neck.

"Make any moves," Alvin hissed, "and your precious chieftain is a goner."

Stoick gave a strangled noise in the back of his throat, struggling against the man holding him. The Outcast clearly had a hard time holding him, especially considering how strong Stoick was, but he was managing to keep him restrained for now.

"Keep walking, accident," Savage intoned, shoving me forward. I started to stumble and fall, but I managed to catch myself.

Stoick had given me up, rejected me. Somebody like him could never want me. So why did this hurt so badly, knowing one false move could mean his death?

I took a breath, forcing myself to walk calmly to the boat, turning only once to take in the scene: the axe wielder scampering for the boat, letting Stoick go at last, Stoick taking unsteadily to his feet, beginning to give chase, Gobber trying to hold back a whimpering Toothless. Trying to stop him from coming after me.

"Toothless," I called out and he glanced sorrowfully up at the sound of my voice. "I'll be okay, bud."

He didn't believe me, but who could blame him? I didn't even believe myself.

Stoick pelted for the boat as Alvin began to trudge up the ramp as well. Stoick grabbed his wrist in a powerful grip, refusing to let go. They exchanged a few words in low voices for a few seconds.

I heard Stoick draw a sharp breath. "Youâ€|youâ€|"

Alvin yanked himself away from the chieftain, tossing the man a cold look before reaching the deck of the boat, calling for the order to draw up the ramp and unfurl the sails.

"This is going to be fun." He told me with a wicked, scary grin. "Just like old times, eh, Hiccup?"

Stoick looked up at me, his expression desperate and pleading. But, when he spotted Alvin leaning down to talk to me, his expression transformed. His lip curled and he turned his back coldly on the boat, beginning to stride away like he didn't even care. He was disgusted. He was disgusted with me. He was disgusted with me because to him, I was nothing, nothing but a dirty Outcast.

The memory of the burning disgust and fierce loathing in his gaze made me feel about two inches tall. I turned away, closing my eyes. I thought maybe I might cry, because my nose was starting to get all stuffy the way it did when I tried to hold back tears, and my eyes grew wet, but I managed to force them back.

When I allowed myself to blink my eyes open again, I found I couldn't look at Stoick or the rapidly shrinking Isle of Berk. I was just leaving more people who didn't want me. They were relieved to have me off their hands.

So why did it have to hurt so bad?

## 24. I'm With You Part II

Untold

### Chapter 24 - I'm With You Part 2

Summary: Continuation of 'I'm With You'. From Stoick's POV.

**\*\*A/N: Hello! \*waves eagerly\* I decided to do this part from Stoick's POV because I really wasn't looking forward to writing the scenes on the boat with Alvin. Anyway. I had some fun with this chapter :)\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I suppose Gobber must've released Toothless, because the dragon came pelting forward, whimpering at the sky, looking as lonely and lost and scared as I was.<p>

I almost wanted to reach out and touch him, soothe him, as I might have soothed Hiccup, as I'd seen Hiccup do so many times before, butâ€”

My thoughts ground to a screeching halt, refusing to move on. The worst part was that I didn't try to change anything. Why had I just stood there, wordless, unmoving, never speaking? Why hadn't I tried to change anything? Yes, I had tried to stop Alvin, had stopped him, actually, from getting on the boat, but the ease with which he had brushed me off stung. I hadn't even been aware that I was planning to say what I did.

But my hand had shot out of its own accord, grabbing his, stopping him from entering the boat, hoping to stop him from getting away with this. And instead of accusing him for attacking my island, berating him for threatening my people, what came tumbling out of my mouth was, "How could you do that to your ownâ€”|your ownâ€”|" I guess I'd meant to say 'tribe member' perhaps, but nothing more passed my lips, so Alvin had jerked his wrist away, staring me down with something close to disgust.

"Simple," he responded, "because he's nothing to me, you fool."

And then he'd stalked back onto his ship, and I'd realized I was still standing there on the docks, my hand curled around thin air, my mouth hanging open. I closed my mouth, but I couldn't turn my gaze from the boat, from watching the Outcasts. One of them leaned down close to Hiccup and whispered something spitefully in his ear. Hiccup flinched back slightly. I saw Savage cuff him on the back of the head, shoving him forward. Alvin grinned down at him and said something.

I could feel my hands forming into fists, a scowl twisting my face. How could Alvin be so cruel to another tribe member? How could Hiccup be nothing to him? How could he treat him this way, like he wasâ€”|like he wasâ€”|my stomach clenched. Like he was \_less than.\_ Like he \_deserved\_ it.

And as my anger caused my blood to boil, as I looked up and met his eye, I realized he looked hurt and lost and lonely and confused. He held my gaze for only a moment, his eyes screaming things at me that his mouth never would. And then he dropped his gaze and I lost the anger.

Because that hurt look in his eyes, that look that conveyed that he really felt like the nothing they were treating him like, that was the same look he'd worn around me. When I'd held the sword above his head and carved traitor into his arm, that hopeless look was the same look he'd worn then.

And I wanted with everything in me to make sure he never looked that way again.

So the boat sailed away at last, and I was left standing there numbly on the docks, watching it grow smaller and smaller in the distance. I clenched my hands into fists, hearing the villagers begin to whisper behind me. I glanced over at the dragon again, crooning and wailing at the sky, alone in his misery. The only part of Hiccup still left here. I took a quick, cautious step towards the dragon. He had seen me harm Hiccup so terribly; he'd growled at me and shot fire at me

the last time we'd seen each other; I was just going to play it safe.

His green eyes flickered over to me. His nostrils flared, and he growled slightly.

In the same instant, I stepped backward again, holding my hands up in surrender. The last thing I planned to do was threaten him.

Toothless threw me a cold look and stalked away, towards the other end of the beach, where he stayed, continuing to croon and moan and warble sadly for his rider to come back.

"We have to do something about this," I whispered as Spitelout and Gobber walked up beside me, watching the sea and sky.

"The dragon will run," Spitelout said unconcernedly, leaning out a bit farther to catch a last glimpse of the boat, I supposed. "Hiccup is long gone, and I bet the dragon knows that. Don't worry, Stoick."

"I didn't mean I didn't know what to do about Toothless," I replied, cutting my brother a look. "I meant what to do about Hiccup?"

"Nothing we can do, Stoick," Spitelout shrugged. "The kid is where he wants to be."

"Excuse me?" Gobber spat.

Both Spitelout and I turned to look at him, surprised by how angry he sounded. His brows were drawn down into a scowl, and he looked furious. His eyes burned into my brother.

"What?" Spitelout demanded, breaking the thick silence.

"How can you say that?" Gobber took a step forward, glaring in accusation at Spitelout. "How can you brush Hiccup off like that, after seeing what he did for us, for Stoick? If it weren't for that kid, we wouldn't be standing here talking about this!"

"Open your eyes, Gobber," snapped Spitelout, "the kid is an Outcast! He belongs with his own kind!"

"No," Gobber interrupted. "He's not. There's something off about that whole thing, don't you think? He doesn't act like an Outcast. He isn't running around on all fours dressed in animal skins, the way most of them are."

"Alvin isn't," Spitelout interjected.

Gobber threw him a nasty look. "Well, fine, maybe he isn't. The point I'm trying to make here is that I don't think Hiccup is an Outcast. He's not like the others. He's nice. He's smart, and he didn't try to kill anybody while he was here. He's humble. He's a good lad, and he's got a great heart. I know it. I've seen it."

"The village always did think you were a little crazy, Gobber," Spitelout sneered, "but really? You're going this far, as to say an

Outcast could ever be good? What is he, now, a family pet? Can we keep him, Stoick, can we keep him?"

"That'sâ€" I tried to say, but Gobber interrupted.

"How dare you!" he cried. "He saved us all from a life of slavery, or no life at all! How dare you speak badly of him while his back is turned!"

"Oh, Gobber," Spitelout drawled, "when was he ever facing us in the first place? He's been turning his back this whole time, why couldn't you ever see it?"

"He's not Outcast material!" Gobber boomed loudly, angrily. "How dare you judge him, you barely even knew him!"

"Neither did you, clearly," Spitelout countered coolly. "Otherwise, he might have thought to tell you his little \_secret\_, don't you think?"

Gobber scowled. "If he didn't tell usâ€|" but he trailed off, and didn't respond.

"Think about that for awhile," Spitelout crossed his arms, triumphant. "And then tell me he's not really an Outcast!"

## 25. I'm With You Part III

Untold

### Chapter 25 - I'm With You Part III

Summary: A continuation of I'm With You.

**\*\*A/N:** Thank you all for the reviews, you fantastic bunch, you! :) You all made my day a bit brighter, which was nice, seeing as I really wasn't feeling well. Just for you guys, here's the next part of the arc!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>When I got onto the boat, the first thing they did was tie my hands behind my back.<p>

Okay, that was more like the second thing they did, seeing as the first thing was to stare at me like I was an insect in a jar, and they were eagerly tapping on the glass. Well, actually, it'd be the third thing, because what they did after that was to begin jeering at me and calling out insults. A few of them jerked me down onto the floor and kicked me, robbing me of my breath.

I lay there on the deck for a few seconds, my cheek stinging from where somebody's fist had found it in the fray, hating everyone around me as the boat was tossed around in the indecisive sea.

"Be careful!" Alvin growled at one of the men, shoving him away from me. "If you break himâ€"

"I wasn'tâ€|I was very carefulâ€|" the man began to sputter.

"Let's hope for your sake you were," Alvin snarled. "Try to hold off on breaking his bones at least until we reach Outcast Island."

That was about the time when he unhurriedly tied the rope around my hands. He pulled it tight, forcing me to cry out as the restraints dug into my skin. At my cry of pain, he glanced up at me, then dropped his gaze, disinterested.

Almost as if he were bored, he cuffed me lightly on the back of the head. Well, I say 'lightly', but what I mean is that he didn't do it with the intent to knock me out, although spots of color and little stars burst in front of my eyes at his rough touch.

"Silence yourself," he snarled.

I stared determinedly down at the deck, waiting for him to walk away and leave me alone.

As the boat reached the docks, I was shoved roughly onto the shore. I wished, for a brief, selfish second, that Toothless was here with me. If he were there, this whole thing would've been so much easier to face.

The sand shifted and crunched beneath my boots as I walked along, trying to keep my balance with my hands behind my back.

It wasn't easy, and I nearly stumbled several times, but there always seemed to be an Outcast behind me, pushing me forward until I tripped and landed in the sand.

"Get up." Alvin snarled.

I was trying to " believe me, I was trying to " but, without my hands to help me, it was proving difficult.

"For the love of Loki!" he cried, jerking me up by a lock of my hair. Once I was sitting up on my knees, he switched his grip to the ropes tied around my wrists instead, physically dragging me along the sand in a kneeling position.

I gritted my teeth, attempting to take to my feet again, so at least I could walk, but Alvin shoved me back down onto my knees.

"Kneel," he ordered.

I glared up at him hatefully, but I obeyed, getting back on my knees. I'd vowed that I wouldn't resist. I'd vowed that I'd play along. I struggled to think, to ignore the burning sensation as my wrists were rubbed raw from the harsh ropes cutting into them.

Alvin's footsteps were the only sound he made all the way to the dungeons, but, when we reached there, he threw me back, away from him, against the stone wall. I collapsed against it with breathtaking impact, and a small moan of pain escaped me.

"I'm just marveling," he spat, his eyes glinting, "just marveling, at the fact that you honestly thought you would ever get away from me. How have I not made this clear enough yet, you stupid boy? I own you."



I glared up at him, trying to shove myself up into a sitting position, ignoring the screaming pain in my ribs from where one of the Outcasts had kicked me; Alvin had apparently agitated it when he'd thrown me. "I am not yours."

"Then explain," he snarled, "tell me why I always seem to end up with you again and again. Look at yourself, do those scars tell you nothing? I own you."

"You always seem to end up with me again and again because you're an old man who has nothing more to do in his spare time thanâ€"

"Shut up," he snapped. I felt like flinching back from the look he gave me then, that cold and hateful glare, but I knew I had to act unafraid. If you let the enemy see you're afraid, you're telling them you have a weakness. They have a way to get to you, and you can bet your boots they're going to use that against you.

I was just glad that my hands were behind my back, for once; now Alvin couldn't see them shaking.

"You are mine, now," he glowered down at me. "You gave yourself to me. I own you, and even you know it now."

For the first time, I remained silent. Not out of fear, but because I had no more to say.

"Don't make me beat it into your head again," he sneered and I could feel myself tensing. "And I will teach you to neverâ€" he leaned down, his face dangerously and scarily close to mine. "â€"Ever try to escape from me again."

\* \* \*

><p>When I came to, hot blood was pouring down the side of my face, and I could feel the warm wetness soaking through my leggings. I pushed myself up weakly, using my arms. Apparently Alvin had decided to go ahead and move me to my cell already, because the familiar cuffs dug into my wrists. Home sweet home.<p>

Sweat or blood â€" one of the two â€" trickled down my neck and forehead. Swiping at it, I was rewarded with the answer that it was sweat.

I slumped back to the floor again, my arms trembling from the effort it took just to hold me up. The warm blood ran down my arm, too; the mild burning sensation was explained then.

As my forehead met the cool rock, my mind flitted, briefly, to Toothless.

Was he alright? How were the people of Berk treating him? Or had he already left? Had he decided to stay somewhere else, or was he staying there? His loyalty probably stretched far enough to send him away, I decided.

Was he missing me, thinking of me, the way I was of him?

I squeezed my eyes shut tightly. No, I couldn't think about

Toothless. Panicked screams threatened at the back of my throat when my mind tried to go that route.

So my mind jumped instead to Berk; how Gobber had yelled, "It can't be true!" How Mildew had encouraged the angry ones and scolded the disbelieving Berkians. How Stoick had towered over me, glaring at me with a cold hatred in his eyes, a disgusted look on his face. How all of this fretting about it didn't matter, because Stoick had never loved me anyway.

I couldn't really think of Berk, either. It made tears prick insistently at my eyes, and I wasn't going to cry, even though I felt like putting my head down and sobbing like I was five years old. I felt like crying, but I refused to let Alvin see that. I refused to let him think I was afraid. Although I was. And he could probably see it with embarrassing ease. I didn't exactly do a stellar job of hiding my emotions, considering how many times I'd had to do that in my life.

I closed my eyes as exhaustion threatened. It had been a long day, and all I wanted to do now was sleep. Maybe I would get a good dream tonight, to escape the nightmare my life was fast becoming.

I tried to scoot my knees up to my chest, but it was an arduous effort and I couldn't help the small groans that managed to escape as I moved. I wrapped an arm around my legs, sniffing as I tried my hardest not to let the tears fall, and I closed my eyes. I knew I probably wouldn't get much sleep. I had never slept much when I was imprisoned here before, either. In fact, I was either awake or my body was finally giving in to the exhaustion that had taken its toll. No, tonight would be a sleepless one.

Not like last night. Last night had been relaxed, safe, secure. For the first time in a long time, with Stoick's strong arms encircling me, I had felt safe.

I could feel my nose beginning to go stuffy again, and the hot tears blurred my vision.

I blinked rapidly, hoping to make them go away. I couldn't cry now.

I dropped my head, letting it rest against the cold stone floor once again. Unbidden, one of the tears left my eyes, splashing onto the cold, hard ground. I swiped at my eyes, wanting to hold onto that peaceful, relaxed feeling that I had had last night. That feeling that no matter what, somebody would always be there to keep me safe. That maybe I might not have to constantly look over my shoulder and depend only on myself.

For the first time in a long time, I had thought that maybe someone would look after me, and keep me safe, that maybe I could depend on them, too.

And just like that, that feeling was gone.

## Chapter 26 - I'm With You Part IV

Summary: Continuation of 'I'm With You'.

**\*\*A/N:** Hello, people! Thank you for all the reviews! You're all too kind :3 :D I hope you enjoy thissss! A bit of a boost, I suppose? I don't really think the chapter is a needed one, but I think that it speeds up the plot. Besides, not to be indifferent or unsympathetic to poor Hiccup right now, but he is, essentially, just in a cell, angsting around about Stoick and Berk and...everything. So. His part would've been boring. So before I bore you all with some random angst, here you gooo :) **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>As Spitelout and Gobber stared each other down, I stepped quickly in between them, putting out a placating arm to both. "That's enough," I announced quietly. "It doesn't matter anymore whether Hiccup truly was an Outcast or not. He's off our hands, we needn't worry about him."<p>

Except, as I strode away, I knew I would worry. I would think about him all night long, and have to suppress the urge to rush to Outcast Island and find him, find him and just hold him close all night long. I would whisper apologies in his ears and he would hug me back and whisper beautiful forgiveness. Things could be okay.

But I knew I would never do it. I told myself I had to forget about Hiccup. Badly as I wanted to believe Gobberâ€|as I tried to tell myself Spitelout was right, my gut insisted he was wrong. Hiccup wasn't an Outcast. He couldn't be.

And if he isn't? I challenged myself. What then?

Because the hardest part of admitting this to myself would be choosing to do the right thing. I wasn't even sure what the right thing was anymore.

All I knew was that I wanted Hiccup, needed him. I needed him to be here, I needed to bring him home before I could truly rest again. Yet, even as I thought it, I knew that his home was not here.

I became aware of clunking footsteps behind me, sinking with soft thuds into the sand. "How can you say that?"

I turned tiredly around to face Gobber; whatever he had to say to me, I felt certain that I didn't want to hear it. Not right now, anyway.

"That boy gave his life for yours, Stoick!" he continued. He caught up with me, stepping in front of me, blocking my path. I knew I could've brushed by him and been done with it, but something rooted me to the spot. There was a grain of truth to his words, one I wanted to hang onto.

"Maybe that sacrifice wasn't hard for him." I tried, but I bit my lip against how terrible and selfish I sounded. Like I was looking for reasons to hate him, just because he was an Outcast. And maybe I was. Maybe I was trying to hate him, and not care about him. Maybe I was

trying to harden my heart against him. "You should've seen him, he knew he was going back anyway!" As my voice gained power, I realized my words didn't. They didn't sound like the truth.

"If he truly was an Outcast," Gobber replied heatedly, "he would have stood aside, and let them kill you, and hidden behind us for as long as possible. But he didn't. Think about that awhile, Stoick. Just go sit and think."

And, with that, he stalked away, leaving me feeling empty and alone on the beach, even though I had my brother, and half my village, there beside me. The low, pained groans of the dragon a few feet away made me feel more alone than ever.

\* \* \*

><p>Damn Gobber.<p>

I knew that I would have done it anyway, done nothing but stare blankly, vacantly, and think and worry and fret about the boy. But it felt good to have somebody to blame for my feelings right then.

I closed my eyes, and Hiccup's face swam behind my lids again. I was not going to get any sleep tonight, I could tell. I didn't even bother lying down. I paced the floors, listening to the wooden boards creak under my weight as I stalked from room to room, my eyes flicking over to the weapons on the walls.

Movement eased my panic only slightly.

I wondered where Hiccup was now, as my eyes locked onto an axe, the firelight reflected in its sharp metal blade. I wondered what he was doing. If Alvin was talking to him. Maybe Alvin was congratulating him for pulling off being innocent so well. Maybe they were overjoyed that they had tricked me. My stomach clenched.

I thought of Alvin's smirk when he'd leaned down and whispered in Hiccup's ear, the way Savage had smacked the back of his head. The way I'd felt my blood rushing through my veins in sharp bursts, the way I had felt like screaming at them to just leave the poor boy alone.

Was Savage hitting him, then, too? Was he hitting him on the back of the head, lightly, maybe, so as to keep him conscious?

Was Hiccup thinking of me, maybe, the way I was of him? I wondered what his house looked like on Outcast Island. Did he have parents, there, or no? Was that why he'd appeared mistreated? Because he had no mother or father to stick up for him?

I remembered the way he'd snuggled down into my arms just last night. I remembered the feeling of my heart swelling with inexpressible joy at the sight of him, all curled up in my arms, smiling sweetly in his sleep. I remembered his whisper in the darkness. \_  
>"Good night, Dad."<em>

I dropped into a seat next to the fire, putting my head in my hands. Why was so it so hard for me to grasp? I had seen it with my own eyes, heard it with my own ears. Hiccup was an Outcast! Everything in me should've been repulsed by him. I should have hated him. I should

have been repulsed at the idea that I had ever even touched him. That he had slept in my house. That he had sat in my chair, eaten my food. I should have been disgusted with him.

Why did I have to love him so much?

\* \* \*

><p>The next morning found me and Gobber sitting in the Great Hall. He had a mug of mead in front of him, and, although he'd offered me one, too, I had refused. I didn't want to let the drink cloud my thoughts, not today. Painful as I knew it was, I did not wish to escape my feelings.<p>

I stared down at the wooden tabletop, waiting for him to say something. We had sat here in silence for much of the night, only ever speaking when we had to.

Gobber gave a yawn, breaking the thick silence.

"I just don't understand it, Gobber," I whispered, more to myself than to him. I probably should have felt bad for keeping him awake all night, but, judging by the dark circles that had been under his eyes, his night hadn't been restful, either. "He's an Outcast, I should hate himâ€|" I lapsed into silence again, staring down at my hands.

I locked them into fists as I waited for his response.

"I don'tâ€|think he's an Outcast," Gobber began tentatively. I wanted so badly to believe himâ€|so why wouldn't I let myself?

"But did you see the way he and Alvin looked at each other?" I insisted, glancing up at him, hoping the torment in my heart didn't show on my face. "They knew each otherâ€"

"But they didn't seem to like each other," Gobber finished for me. "Every word out of Hiccup's mouth was an insult, and every one out of Alvin's was a threat. Doesn't that tell you anything, Stoick?"

"Iâ€|" I glanced down at my clenched fists, because I just knew I couldn't meet Gobber's eye. "What ifâ€|" I glanced uncertainly up at him again. "What if it was all just a game? He was nice to us, but maybe he was ordered to be. He didn't try to hurt any of us, but maybe that's because he couldn't."

"Stoick, listen." Gobber put a hand on my arm. "I don't think you're getting it. Hiccup had access to your house. He had access to the forge; I should know, I gave him a key, for Thor's sake. He had a Night Fury if he really wanted to do some damage, and still you insist on believing that it was all just an act? He was peaceful, Stoick, and all he cared about was getting safely away. People only run like that when they have something to run \_from\_."

There was a long silence. I knew Gobber was waiting for my decree.

"I'll need help." I whispered finally.

Gobber's eyes widened in sudden hope, sudden understanding.

"The village will be difficult to convince." I stood up, pushing myself back from the table. "C'mon, Gobber, I'm gonna need your help."

## 27. I'm With You Part V

Untold

### Chapter 27 - I'm With You Part V

Summary: Continuation of 'I'm With You'.

**\*\*A/N:** Here you gooo :) Oh, this idea was given to me by the lovely RazzlePazzleDooDot \*whispers\* blame her for what I'm putting poor Hiccup through\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Either I passed out again or I really had managed to fall asleep, because there was a large gap in my memory from the night before. It didn't come back that day, no matter how hard I pushed it.<p>

My eyes fluttered open and I gazed around the room in bewilderment. Where was I? I didn't remember any place on Berk being so dark or threateningâ€¦ I shuddered from the deep chill pervading the room and, when I tried to sit up, my hands stayed firmly behind my back. Peering around to see what had caused it, I realized there were handcuffs covering my wrists. My stomach dropped, and a scream threatened in my throat.

I wasn't on Berk. That explained the darkness and fear and cold. That explained the way this room looked more like a cell than anything I'd ever seen on Berk. I took a breath as the previous day's events washed over me again. I'd nearly forgotten about all that.

I closed my eyes with a slight groan. I wanted to be as far from here as possible. I wanted to be on Berk again, where it felt like home, like home, like homeâ€¦

But I knew in my heart that my home was here, not there. And I knew that I could never go back.

\* \* \*

><p>The next few days passed in much the same fashion. I woke up, sometimes to somebody hitting me on the head, sometimes to somebody with food, sometimes to nothing at all. Nothing except constant aloneness. I would lay there for long periods of time, almost in a daze as I ran through the events of the past few days over and over again in my head. Had I made the right decision? Did it feel like it? Was Toothless alright? How was Berk faring now that I was gone?<p>

I wondered how big Gobber's workload in the forge was nowadays, without me there to lessen it. I wondered if Stoick's job was any harder now, having to clean up after an Outcast attack. I bet the healer was really busy. Hopefully, I'd managed to step in before anyone could be seriously hurt, but what if I had gotten there too

late? I hadn't beaten the Outcasts to Berk, but I'd hoped that I'd been right on their tail. I wanted to let sleep overtake me again, but it wouldn't come. I was simply too wound to even close my eyes.

More than anything, I wanted to move, because motion would ease all the tension and anxiety in my body from these last few days. But I knew that freedom was the last thing I'd get, even if I wanted it only temporarily.

I had stayed crouched on my knees for much of the day, so, when I stretched my legs out in front of me, pins and needles began jabbing at them. I winced as I shifted, trying to get comfortable before the door opened again, pouring light into the room. I dropped my head as my eyes watered from the sudden, unexpected brightness. I felt rough hands jerking my chin upward, and, in the blinding light, I saw something that looked a bit like Alvin, sneering down at me. He was gripping something sharp, something that glinted in the firelight from the next room, and I wondered if it was a knife. I readied myself for the pain, but, when he stabbed the weapon into my arm, I didn't feel anything. And I mean anything. A strange kind of numbness spread from the area, and I tried to pull my arm away, to force myself to speak. "What are you doing?" I demanded angrily, letting my hands fall into my lap.

"Oh, you'll see," Alvin replied, giving my head that soothing pat that he used to give me when I was a kid, and he felt like I was asking too many questions. I would always lean into the touch, and savor it, because he never showed affection for me until he wanted me to shut up. So I'd let my guard down and do exactly what he wanted, hoping he would pat my head again, or give me another of his rare, condescending smiles that meant that I didn't understand what I was talking about.

I shied away from his touch, my hand going automatically to my arm, trying to find out what was going on beneath the skin. I could feel my limbs becoming heavy, like they do just before you fall asleep, but I was still wide awake as I cradled my arm. "What did you do to it?" I demanded, glaring up at Alvin once more.

"Don't get yourself worked up, it's temporary." He cuffed me lightly on the head and I leaned back against the wall, trying to avoid it. My eyes fell back on my numb arm with concern. The numbness was spreading outward, from my arm to my shoulder and hand, from my shoulder to my neck, etc. etc.

"What is it?" I repeated angrily, hating that I was at his mercy right now. Hating that I didn't know what was going on, and he did. Hating that I needed him to tell me. A sharp burst of pain roiled through me for a second and I dropped my head, staring at my knees, trying to tell myself it was just pain.

"You'll survive." Alvin replied sharply. "Stop asking so many questions." He unlocked my handcuffs with the large, rusty key I had seen a million times last time I was here. The key I had actually managed to swipe a whopping total of twice. The key that Alvin beat me for swiping.

I lifted my arms and rubbed my wrists suspiciously, narrowing my eyes at Alvin. "What do you want from me?"

"Nothing," he responded quietly. "Why don't you get up, walk around? The door's unlocked if you'd like to take a stroll outside."

I didn't move. "No, thank you," I responded sharply.

"Don't tell me you're too proud to accept my offer?" he looked hurt. "Come now, Hiccup, I'm not that bad."

"I would rather die than accept anything from you." I told him.

"Oh, that's cold," he replied sadly. "Do we have to do this the old-fashioned way, or do you want to see for yourself?"

"See what for myself?" I reached up to scratch at my nose with my hand, preparing for the marvel of not being stopped by short chains. That had happened a lot on Berk. But nothing happened. My arm wouldn't move. I stared down at it for a second, trying to reach up again. When it didn't move for the second time, I raised my head to glare at Alvin. "What the hell did you put in my arm?!"

"Do I have to spell out everything for you?" he folded his arms, a smirk lighting up his face. "Think on it, Hiccup. It'll come to you."

It wasn't just my arm that wouldn't respond to my commands. It was my whole body. Trying to pull my knees up to my chest was hopeless, and moving my hands even harder. Panic began to set in as I looked up at him again, my breaths coming faster and faster. "You—you—"

"The last person I used it on wasn't nearly as slow," he taunted, leaning against the wall. "I mean, honestly, having to tell you what I did just takes all the fun out of it."

"You—paralyzed me?!" I finally managed to spit out the words. "What the hell—undo it!"

I knew I shouldn't have been yelling. Raising my voice would result in a worse beating. But I couldn't help it, I was too scared to lower my voice. If I could move, my hands would have been shaking. But that was the thing that really scared me: I couldn't move, I couldn't move, I couldn't move.

"Oh, I feel just awful," Alvin sighed. "The truth is, I can't."

"What?" My heart sped up. "No. That's not true. You're lying."

"I'm not," he replied.

"Yes, you are. What possible reason could you have for telling me the truth?"

"Maybe if you stopped and listened long enough, you'd realize I am telling the truth. You have to wait for it to wear off."

A wave of relief washed over me. "Alright. It wears off."

"Of course it does," he responded, like he thought I was being an idiot. "I wouldn't paralyze you permanently, not right now. I need



too much from you to give you that. That treat comes once I'm done with you, Hiccup."

I couldn't stop the shudder that rippled through me. When would he be done with me? He'd never spoken like this when I was first imprisoned, or any of the times that I had escaped—was he going to be done with me anytime soon?

And if he was—did that mean that, if there was no more use for me—? Was he going to kill me?

I had always considered myself relatively safe when it came to Alvin. The other tribes that I managed to escape to, they often threatened me with death, and it wasn't like I wanted to die. But mostly, the reason I kept fighting was for Toothless. Because he was the only thing that mattered anymore. I would've surrendered happily to Alvin, and let him beat me into a blissful death, but I needed to stay alive for Toothless. Because I knew that dragon would never try to escape without me, even if he could. Even if he didn't need the tail, he was loyal to me, he loved me. And so he would have stayed with me. I could never have allowed myself to die, because that would have been unfair to Toothless. That would have tied him to this island forever, and, knowing how much we both hated it, I didn't think I was selfish enough to do that to him.

And so I knew I would keep fighting, even if Alvin tried to kill me. And yet, after issuing a lot of threats about execution when I refused to kill Toothless, he just locked me up. He never spoke a word about killing me after he decided against it, so I considered the cell to be, in some small, twisted way, safety. Other tribes weren't afraid to be rough with me when they heard of the fabled "Dragon Conqueror". They weren't afraid to attempt to steal me away from my own prison and lock me up in another. They weren't afraid of hurting me, of killing me.

But Alvin was just gentle enough, just enough to tell me that he didn't want me dead. Not yet.

And now?

I honestly wasn't sure.

## 28. Take it Like a Man

Untold

### Chapter 28 - Take It Like A Man

Summary: Set back when Hiccup is twelve, when Alvin first locked him up. Torture for the glorious sake of torture

\* \* \*

><p>I guess I sort of expected my father to release me.<p>

The handcuffs were attached to the wall, but he had another pair awaiting me, a pair that allowed me to move freely. He slipped them over my wrists and fastened them tightly, and all thoughts of release were gone.

"What are you doing?" I demanded as he shoved me forward wordlessly. I tripped and stumbled over my own two feet, unable to keep my balance without my hands to help me.

"Keep walking," Savage intoned from beside him, and I felt a large, rough hand physically grabbing me by the collar of my vest and setting me back up on my feet. I winced when he pushed me forward, his none-too-gentle fingers finding a healing bruise.

I ran through all the possibilities of what this might be leading to, but none seemed to make much sense until we reached the whipping post.

Now might be a good time to tell you that on Outcast Island, we have about thirteen or fourteen whipping posts in town alone. In the dungeons and cells and things, we have about twenty-five. I've been tied to too many not to know that.

I guess I was a bit confused even when I saw the post and even when my father forced me onto my knees next to it and chained me to it, because I was thinking, 'we have a post in the dungeons. Why didn't he just whip me there if he wanted to hurt me?'

"It seems a few of my villagers are feeling particularly vindictive about you lately, 'Iccup." Father told me with a strange kind of smile, a smile that was almostâ€|scary. Forget the 'almost' part â€" it was scary. "Oh, but don't you worry â€" I've assured them you're getting the proper punishment for your betrayal. They wanted to see this for themselves, of course, and who am I to refuse my own people?"

In fact, as I looked around, I realized the sight of me, Father, and Savage standing there was drawing a crowd; the Outcasts gathered slowly around, some watching warily from the corners of their eyes, unsure if they wanted to see this, others with greedy and satisfied looks.

Father reached over and took the whip from the post with care, lashing it out at air for a couple seconds, a crisp, cracking noise echoing every time he did. I winced slightly as I realized that that whip was about to hit my skin.

Sure enough, after a few seconds, the harsh sound cracked in the air again, but this time, a startling flash of pain followed it. I drew a breath, biting my lip, hunching my back slightly; it was the only sort of defense I could give.

The second time the whip hit me, it drew a whimper from me, but I didn't care. Maybe it would make my father stop hurting me and make him realize I was still his son.

Oh, wait, I thought to myself sarcastically as his terrible words came back to me: "You're not my son."

Funny how a whipping could make you forget everything else. I tried to lean farther down, get as far away from the pain as I possibly could, although I knew I hadn't a hope; I was chained securely to the post and I knew now that my dad was not about to release me.

The third time the whip cracked against my bare skin, tears of pain sprang to my eyes and I tried to bite my tongue against the cry of pain. I had seen a few whippings occur on this island; when you were an Outcast, violence was an everyday thing. It didn't mean I had to like it. I had always turned away from the whippings whenever I could.

Now, I had no hope of escape, because the victim of this brutal beating was myself. The whip hit me for the fourth time, and the tears spilled over. I felt hot blood running down my back and I knew the whip must've broken the skin from its onslaught.

All around us, the Outcasts were beginning to cheer. They watched the whipping with hungry looks on their faces, looks that disgusted me now and had ever since I was little. I wanted to hide my face so I didn't have to look at them anymore, but the chains were too short to allow me to bring my hands up to my face.

By the fifth and sixth lashes, I had given up trying to use my hands and just leaned down, putting my forehead against the cool, wet grass, damp from rain. I allowed the tears to come down my cheeks and sobs to come out of my throat. The whip cracked through the air for the seventh time, hitting my back with a painful lash.

Blood was leaking freely from my back now and, as I listened to the whip whistling through the air, I knew I wasn't going to be able to go through all of this. However many lashes he had planned, I could tell I was going to pass out before they were completed. Black spots were dancing in my vision and my stomach was churning from the smell of blood. The pain was making it hard to focus and the tears made it hard to see.

The Outcasts were still screaming for my blood, my murder, but I clung to the pathetic hope that Father still cared about me enough not to kill me. I mean, wasn't that what fathers were supposed to do for their sons? Care about them?

As the whip's eighth and ninth arcs through the air were completed, I spat out a single word, every syllable ripped from me by pain, turned into a scream of terror and agony. "Please!"

The whip hesitated in the air, the tenth lash hanging incomplete.

I saw my chance and I tried to jump on it. "Pleaseâ€|no moreâ€|it hurts, Fatherâ€|it hurtsâ€|"

Snickers from the Outcasts. "What a hiccup," whispered one man.

"Too weak to even take a decent whipping," jeered another.

"I'm \_so sorry\_," Father said, his voice just dripping with sarcasm, "that this is causing you discomfort, but you see, you caused me discomfort when you betrayed us." His voice lost its fake, sweet tone and turned hard. \_"Take it like a man, \_Hiccup."

"Fatherâ€|" I managed weakly. "Don't do this to me."

Father stepped away from me and stared down at me coldly. "I'm not your father, Hiccup. Not anymore."

I dropped my head, hoping my bangs would hide the fresh tears forming in my eyes. "Don't do this," I pleaded.

"It's alright," he said soothingly, reaching down and gently stroking my hair, like my mother used to do when I was upset. I had grown too old to be soothed in this manner anymore, but I let him stroke me anyway because I hadn't yet made the decision that I hated him and that I never wanted him to touch me again. "It's alright, Hiccup â€" the Night Fury is getting the same treatment as you, don't you worry."

"Wh-what?" The tears spilled down my cheeks as my eyes widened. I rose up on my hands and knees, trying hard not to move too much, as it caused a wave of agony to roil through me whenever I did. "N-no! You can't hurt him! Don't, you can't, Iâ€"

"Oh, calm down, Hiccup," Father insisted, again in that falsely soothing tone as he took his hands off my head. "Who knows? It might not be as pathetic as you are â€" it might actually \_survive \_its punishment."

"Please," I pleaded breathlessly, but Savage reached over and shoved my head down, forcing me to study the dirt again.

"Take it like a \_man\_, you pathetic runt."

## 29. I'm With You Part VI

Untold

### Chapter 29 - I'm With You Part VI

Summary: Continuation of I'm With You

\*\*A/N: Woo! Thanks for being so patient with me, I had terrible writer's block! For anybody wondering how long this arc is gonna be, I'd say maybe five more parts? Lots of ground to cover! :D I love you all for your reviews, and my love grows with each one. So please keep leaving them? :D \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Jorgenson!" Gobber bellowed importantly, scowling at my brother, who was lagging behind. "C'mon, get up here! Quit bringing up the rear!"<p>

Spitelout's face twitched in annoyance. "I'm sorry if my pace is bothering you," he began sarcastically, "but I'm not exactly leaping for joy over here, going to fetch dirty Outcast scum. Forgive me for thinking my tribe is more important than that traitor."

There was that word again, traitor. A part of me registered that Spitelout had just said something against Hiccup, and that I should probably defend the boy, but just as I opened my mouth, Gobber beat me to it, which was lucky. I had nothing to say anyway.

"You're forgiven," Gobber replied casually.

Spitelout took a threatening step forward.

"Drop it," I ordered, trying to muster up the anger to glare at them. But everything about me in that moment was numb and hollow. My hope had returned, warm and bright and glowing, when I'd agreed to go after Hiccup, but the longer I thought about him, the less hope I had had. It seemed very unlikely now that, if Hiccup wasn't a spy, if he'd truly run from Outcast Islandâ€|then why would Alvin let him back into the fold? What made Alvin want him back?

It was starting to look more and more likely that Alvin had just decided to kill him for his betrayal. But the instant my mind tried to go that route, my heart began to ache like an actual, physical pain. I couldn't let myself imagine it.

Snotlout, my nephew, who was lagging behind his father, sent me an apologetic grimace as he approached Gobber and Spitelout stalked off, shooting Gobber an infuriated look.

"Any weapons that need repairs?" Gobber barked at him.

Snotlout saluted respectfully. I vaguely registered that Gobber was being more of a chief than I was in that moment and I wasn't sure if I should actively try to change it.

"Sir, yes, sir," Snotlout reported. "Three axes, one mace, six swords."

"Good lad," Gobber nodded. "I'll get on those."

"Anything else you need me to do, sir?" Snotlout offered, his attention fixed on Gobber. Beneath the numbness, I felt a tiny hint of approval for the boy in front of me. He had been pale and shaken when Alvin had taken Hiccup back, but ever since then, he'd gained dark circles under his eyes and thrown himself into every bit of work he could find with vigor.

"It's good for him, Stoick," Gobber had knowledgeably explained to me as he polished a spear. "It's good for Snotlout to keep busy at a time like this. I think he liked and looked up to Hiccup, and it's not good for him to dwell on it."

There was plenty to keep a strong young lad like Snotlout busy these days, and he was doing a good job taking care of all of it.

Gobber considered for a moment, looking Snotlout up and down. The boy looked like he was about to collapse from exhaustion, but his eyes were alert and bright.

"Grab some more supplies from the storage bunker," Gobber ordered. "And when you're done with that, you can help the Hoffersons in collecting water. I'll give you another job from there."

"Yes, sir," Snotlout nodded once before racing off to fulfill these tasks.

Gobber began to slowly stump away in the direction of the forge, to repair the weapons. A part of me wanted to ask him to stay behind, or give me a job to do. Everybody else was staying busy. Why couldn't I?

More to the point, why couldn't I find a task that occupied my mind as well as my hands? Because, no matter what I did, Hiccup was always at the forefront of my thoughts, sneaking into my mind. Why couldn't I just focus on my jobs instead of him for just two seconds?

I watched Gobber disappear into the crowd, the cry of seagulls ringing in my ears. I turned away to watch the waves crash and break and foam over the rocks, watching the rocks emerge, utterly unbroken and as strong as ever.

My mind jumped to Savage hitting the back of Hiccup's head; my heart clenched, my vision tinted red. All I could do was hope and pray that those waves weren't wearing that rock down, that it would continue to come out whole and perfect and healthy. All I needed was to know that he was staying strong until I could hold him in my arms. And if I could do that, then I could breathe again.

### 30. I'm With You Part VII

Untold

#### Chapter 30 - I'm With You Part VII

Summary: Continuation of I'm With You

**\*\*A/N:** Omg, thank you for all the reviews! Had some extra time on my hands, so I got this written :3 please enjoy. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>Alvin was carefully fingering his sword, a sort of vague smile lingering on his features. "While I'm here, why don't you tell me about Berk? I haven't been there for years. It seems as though quite a lot has changed in the time I've been away."<p>

My heart clenched at the name of the island and a thousand things raced forward, trying to tumble off my tongue.

"\_It's an amazing place with amazing people."\_

"\_None of your damn business, you prick."\_

"\_Just more people who don't want me."\_

"\_I gained even more enemies there."\_

"\_I think I'm next on their hit list."\_

I dropped my head so he couldn't see my face. So I could show a bit of fear and sorrow, so I could quickly and quietly mourn everything I had lost there.

"Don't give me the silent treatment, Hiccup," he teased, forcing my chin upward. "You know you want to tell me everything, don't you?"

"That's funny," I responded, trying my hardest to yank my chin out of his hands, forgetting I was unable to. A little flash of panic chilled my blood as I remembered my inability to move or defend

myself. "Because last time I escaped, you didn't exactly break out the tea and cookies and ask me for a long description of my adventures."

In an instant, he had released my chin and brought his fist down on my head. The impact sent me reeling back and I fell limply at his feet. Black spots danced in my vision, and my head throbbed. I gritted my teeth, determined to sit up so I was no longer at his feet.

Before I could so much as try, Alvin kicked me, hard, in the face. Pain exploded in my nose, an ominous crack echoing through the cell. I cried out instinctively, the throbbing spreading instantly from my head to my nose.

Alvin used my hair to jerk me back up and pinned me against the wall. My heart started hammering and I couldn't breathe as I stared into his narrowed eyes. He had pinned me like this many times before, but the fear I'd felt then was nothing to the terror and panic consuming me now. Back then, he had never looked quite so scary. And back then, I could move.

"You have one last chance," he spat. "Show me you have a grain of sense, and tell me what happened to you on Berk!"

"What's it to you?" I managed to say, but the look he gave me then shut me up instantly.

"You're not the one asking questions here," he snarled. "And I'm asking you one more time. What was it like there?" he tilted my chin upward, forcing me to look at him.

My resolve flickered; I needed to tell him, otherwise the beating would be so much worse. But somewhere within my addled mind, I registered that maybe he needed something from me, something I could give him. Like a description of the way Berk was now, or how the people spent their days. His reasons were never innocent. And I had made him promise not to hurt the people of Berk, and I was going to make him make good on that promise, no matter what.

I shrugged, trying to keep my face blank. "It's just an island, I guess."

"Just an island, really?" One of his scary mood swings had occurred during the last ten seconds and he was smiling again, his eyes glittering. "If it's just an island, why would you take such drastic measures to make sure I never harmed anyone on there again?"

I was silent, and Alvin knew he had won.

He chuckled. "Now tell me about Berk. Because it's clearly more than just an island."

I stared at the ground, weighing my options. I could spill my guts about Berk and tell him everything he wanted to know, and save my own skin. I thought of the way they'd held the sword against Stoick's throat. That wasn't even a choice to me.

I could feed him more lies about it, but he would see right through me.

Alvin slowly drew his sword, holding it menacingly against my throat. "I'm waiting."

I eyed the metal blade carefully. "You're bluffing."

"You're half-right." he responded quietly, taking the blade away from me again. "I think I'll let you keep your headâ€¦I want to play a game with you."

"What sort of game?" I asked nervously. I had a feeling I wasn't going to like it.

"I'm going to ask you some questions, and, for every non-answer you give me, I think I'll choose a part of your body you don't need â€" say your finger, maybe your arm â€" and justâ€¦" his sword slid down to my shoulder, pressing into it, drawing a bit of blood. "â€¦Take it off your hands."

My breathing hitched slightly. "What if I don't want to play?"

"Then I can play it alone."

I could feel my heart beginning to speed up as he carefully dug the blade a bit deeper into my shoulder. Agony roiled through me, and, though I reached up to cradle my shoulder, my hand wouldn't move. I was again reminded of this temporary hell. I wanted to drop my head in my hands and just scream, or cry, one of the two, but I tried my hardest to stay impassive.

"I'm waiting for your decision, Dragon Boy."

"Will you be asking me questions about Berk?" I asked.

"And if you like having both arms and legs, you'll answer," Alvin responded. "Now."

He began to slowly circle me, taking his sword slowly out of my shoulder, digging it back in a couple times to increase the pain. I took a deep breath, trying not to wince, not to show pain. Everything in me wanted to flinch away, but couldn't. I was frozen in my agony.

"Start talking." he commanded. "What happened there? Tell me everything."

"Everything, everything?" I began, my voice shaking slightly. I hoped the grin I gave him was cheeky and not a grimace of the terror that was building inside me. "Because, you know, I was there for six months, we'll be gone an awfully longâ€¦"

Alvin grabbed my hand, holding the sword at the wrist. "That's one part you don't need."

I winced as I felt it beginning to dig into my wrist.



## Chapter 31 - I'm With You Part VIII

Summary: Continuation of I'm With You

**\*\*A/N: EVERYBODY READ THIS\*\***

**\*\*I am going to delete this story if all the nasty backlash I've been receiving for starting another story with this one in the works is going to continue. I have had this problem for months on Gift or Curse as well, and I tried to ignore it, but it got worse and worse. So I'm simply stopping this one before it can get started. If you don't like Ashes, that's fine. But keep your nasty comments to yourself or I'm done posting on this site. Period. I do not exist to serve you. I do not exist to cater to any of your desires. I have a life outside of Fanfiction. It's true that I like to write, that, in fact, you can most often find me with a pen. But that is the point, is that I started writing because I liked it. I did not write to please anyone. I will no longer tolerate your reviews. I won't even bother reading them if you insist on acting as if I owe you something. I OWE YOU NOTHING. I am writing for FUN. It'd be different if I promised you weekly updates or whatnot, but my stories come with nothing of the sort. So leave me alone if you insist on demanding updates in an impertinent manner. I don't care if you ask politely - in fact, it's sweet to know that some of you would like to see this story. But if you insist on demanding it, acting as if I was put on this earth to cater to your every desire, that's when we have a problem. Everybody leave me alone or I will delete this story.\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>We awoke the next morning to an unpleasant surprise: Toothless was gone. He had gone after his rider, Gobber insisted, but some other villagers favored the excuse that he had just run. I didn't believe the second one, and I didn't want to believe the first. I wouldn't pretend I was on excellent terms with Toothless, especially after everything that had happened between the three of us, but I still didn't want him to die. And I was sure that if the Outcasts happened upon him, they would kill him. I had never known Alvin the Treacherous to keep a promise.<p>

I rubbed my temples tiredly as I looked out over the Vikings standing on the deck of my ship, the one that would be leading the rest of the fleet. A few of them were chattering to the neighbors; some stood alone. Snotlout looked sorrowfully out to sea, as if thinking staring hard enough would bring both dragon and boy back safe and sound. The hope that they were still both fighting, still breathing—that was the only thing keeping me going. If I let myself lose hope, I had lost everything. Clinging to hope, no matter how slim, was the only way I'd survive.

Gobber fiddled with his prosthetic as he stared out to sea, too. When his gaze landed on Snotlout, it was filled with both warmth and worry. "I don't think the lad's eaten or slept since Hiccup—he was taken back." Although he had cut himself off, I won't pretend it wasn't agony just to hear his name. I tried to shut it out and focus on being a chief.

Sixteen years ago, my son had died in the midwife's arms, my wife in mine. I had thought that I had felt the worst pain a human being

could possibly endure, and that I had survived it. But now I was starting to think that this odd squeezing in my chest just from hearing the beginning of the name of the boy I loved was going to kill me. I couldn't breathe. Gobber's worried look was still fixed on Snotlout, and, for that, I was glad; he hadn't seen me nearly breaking down, right in front of him.

"I just think somebody should talk to him." He cut me a look here, like he expected me to volunteer. But how could I be expected to reassure Snotlout, a boy I hardly knew, when I couldn't even reassure myself?

I nodded numbly, turning my own gaze out to sea, remembering the waves battering the rocks. I noted that I couldn't see the rocks anymore. The waves must have overtaken them at last. Maybe they weren't as strong as they needed to be.

\* \* \*

><p>As the ships slowly set sail away from Berk, painfully slowly, Snotlout released the edge of the boat and slowly sat down, staring at his hands, clenching and unclenching them. I paced the deck of the ship, up and down, up and down, looking out over the horizon, wondering where he was now. Was he doing okay, or was he like those rocks, utterly suffocated by the waves?<p>

Although I knew thinking and worrying would do no good, I couldn't keep my thoughts from straying down that path. The atmosphere in the ship was tense and I could almost feel Gobber, Spitelout and Snotlout's eyes following my every move.

"Do you think Toothless really is searching for him?" Snotlout blurted uncomfortably, clearly only hoping to break the tense silence.

"It looks like it," Gobber replied grimly, softly. He looked out to sea for a moment, before adding softly, "We'll be passing Meathead Island soon."

I wondered why he was bothering to tell me. I knew the Archipelago like the back of my hand. I had a map of it tacked up on the wall by the fireplace. I had memorized it to the point where I didn't even have to look at it anymore when I needed to know something about geography.

Snotlout perked up slightly at the news, but I knew what he was thinking, and I responded to his unspoken question. "That's nowhere near Outcast Island."

The hope in Snotlout's gray eyes faded, and he drifted back into his seat. His gaze traveled back out to sea, and he rested his cheek on his hand as he looked out.

"Stoickâ€| " My brother took to his feet, beginning to pace a bit like I was. "I ask you to just question the wisdom of this one more time, just think about if you should really risk yourself and your tribe for oneâ€"

Gobber opened his mouth, but the voice that spoke â€" well, more like yelled, really â€" was not his.

"That's enough, Spitelout!" I surprised myself when I found I'd drawn my sword. I didn't even remember touching the weapon. I didn't remember taking such long strides towards my brother, but I was standing right in front of him now. "We are going after him and nothing you try to say is going to make me change my mind. You can have your opinion of him, but just keep it to yourself, alright? Sit down and shut up."

Snotlout came out of his reverie long enough to watch his father being chewed out, and then locked eyes with me and mouthed an apology. I nodded at him to let him know his silent communication had been received and appreciated.

Gobber was watching our argument with raised eyebrows and a bit of a grin on his face.

"Stoick, I'm only sayingâ€"

"Spitelout. Sit down and shut up. Two very simple commands that I'm sure even you can follow."

Spitelout's mouth dropped open, his face flushing bright pink for a moment. However, he stalked back towards his end of the ship in what he must have seen as dignified, shooting me a venomous look as he sat down. I couldn't have cared less whether or not he was angry with me. All I cared about right now was getting as fast as I could to Outcast Island.

## 32. I'm With You Part IX

Untold

Chapter 32 - I'm With You Part IX.

Summary: None

\*\*A/N: So, here it is! It's pretty long, I hope that makes up for the wait! :) I tried to make it nice and angsty...who'd like to tell me how I did?\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Do you remember when you promised you wouldn't resist?" Alvin's voice was hard to hear through the blinding pain. I knew he didn't really want an answer, and I didn't bother to give him one. He smirked down at me, my face twisted in pain and hatred, and he jerked my chin upward. "Oh, you look wonderfully horrid. All this blood suits you. I love it." A sickening laugh, and then my chin was released once more, and it's as if he had never interrupted himself to begin with. "I've decided that you're going back on that promise. I've never known you to keep one, anyway. That's about the only Outcast quality you have."<p>

I wanted to yell at him that I would rather die than have any qualities like him, but it was taking all my effort to hold back the screams that threatened the deeper the knife cut into my wrist.

"Besides, I've seen too much evidence now. You've been much too difficult. Purposely avoiding my questions about Berk, giving me sarcastic answers" The blade twisted in my skin. A slight cry fell from my unprepared lips. "but I don't care if you resist." he smirked. "Because every time you resist, I'll just push you closer and closer. I will bend you more and more until I break you." His eyes were cold with amusement as he began to cut through what I felt sure was bone.

My next scream echoed hollowly around the dungeon and his smirk was hard to see now; everything had gone a strange, hazy orange from all the pain. I could still feel him faintly drawing blood, twisting his sword ever deeper. I hoped to Thor that I would pass out soon because I wasn't sure how much longer I could stand the pain anymore. I closed my eyes, before the pain ripped them open again, drawing a third scream from me.

As Alvin released my hand, he held it up for me to see: it had cut through bone, clinging on by skin. "Do you like it?" he whispered. "Because I'm loving the changes I've already brought to your body. Maybe next I'll cut out your tongue, and you'll learn not to challenge me."

As he spoke, he slowly turned my wrist over, letting me get a good view of the back and front; he really was going to take off my hand. In fact, he already had. There really was no hope left for it now. I knew he was going to go ahead and take off the rest for kicks, but I couldn't stop the tears that began to pool in my eyes, dripping down my face. I caught sight of a cut on my arm and tried my hardest to raise my head to look. Alvin chuckled when he saw my weak struggles.

"Oh, it's nothing to worry about," he assured me, lowering my arm a bit so I could get a glimpse. "Just a little reminder of who really owns you."

MINE, it read across my arm in bold letters.

"You see, I don't like this," he whispered, seating himself beside me and turning my wrist over again, revealing the 'traitor' scar. "It looks as though somebody else tried to take you, and I couldn't have that. Just remember who really owns you, Hiccup."

Strangely, it was the stupid carving in my arm that sent me over the edge. The tears suddenly began to fall faster and I couldn't control the sobs in my throat. They were sobs of fear and frustration and helplessness and loneliness and sadness. I tried my hardest to force them back, but I'd been keeping it all inside for so long now. I couldn't do it any longer.

It shouldn't hurt so badly. Why was I not used to it?

The tears ran down my cheeks, dripping off my nose, splattering hopelessly onto the floor. I should have wanted to swipe at them, maybe close my eyes so Alvin wouldn't see, but I couldn't move and I honestly wasn't sure how much I cared. What did I have left to lose? I wondered.

My hand was gone, that much was clear, and I was sure the rest of me would soon follow. But I knew Alvin and I knew he'd do it slowly and

painfully. He was going to hear me beg, hear me scream before he killed me. And when he did, I was sure to find death the more merciful fate.

This thought triggered more tears, and Alvin was laughing as he towered over me. His face was blurry above me as he chuckled. He put one hand on my chin, forcing my vision upward, forcing me to look at him. His gloating smile had never been wider or more apparent. He was enjoying this. A sickening, twisted smile lit up his face, his dark eyes glittering as they stared into mine.

The terror crept back in, choking me, scrambling my every clear thought. If I could move, my hands would have been shaking as I locked eyes with him.

"Aww." he chuckled, his voice a mere whisper, but loud as a scream to my ears. "Am I scaring you, Hiccup?"

"Iâ€¦" I searched my heart for bravery and found none. All my courage failed under his hard glare. I wanted to say that I wasn't afraid of him and one day be able to face him unflinchingly. But I couldn't. My heart was pounding when I met his eye.

When I didn't speak, only stared at him like a frightened deer, he smirked. "That's what I thought."

I wanted to jerk away from him, but I couldn't. I wanted to yell at him, but my vocal chords were frozen with fear. So I cried, because crying was the only thing I could do, the only way to show how hopelessly terrified I was.

And I hated myself for the way it made Alvin's smile grow, I hated myself for every salty, hot tear that dripped down my face, and I hated myself for the loud, terrified sobs that burst out of my throat. Most of all, I hated myself for not being able to say that I was not afraid. So I sat there and sobbed in my little cell, and I waited for Alvin's next move, silently begging him to leave, only I knew he wouldn't leave. He wanted this. He liked that I was crying. If I challenged him, he got frustrated for a little while, but I knew every tear that dripped down my face more than made up for my resistance, in his eyes.

I wanted to cover my face with my hands so Alvin couldn't see me anymore, but again, I couldn't move. And even when he laughed harshly, even when he leaned down close to me again, even when I wanted to flinch back, I could do nothing except cry. His laughter rang throughout the dungeon and he grabbed a lock of my hair, using it to throw me to the ground. I landed on my side with a slight gasp of pain, and the tears began falling faster, because now my side was hurting, too, and Alvin wanted me at his feet because he planned to hurt me a lot more, I was sure of it.

And then he grabbed my wrist and began to run the blade back and forth across it again, reminding me of what he was taking away from me and all I did was stare up at him and cry.

And that's when a loud, ringing knock came on the door. "Chief? Chief?"

Alvin fell silent, letting the blade clatter to the ground. I tried

to quiet my sobs. It was bad enough that Alvin had seen my tears â€" I wasn't going to let his lackey take pleasure in it, too.

Alvin ripped the door open and unnaturally bright light flooded the room. My eyes watered; my vision had adjusted quite well to the darkness.

"What is it?" Alvin demanded, his fingers going to his sword, only to find empty space. He turned back to the dungeon doorway with hatred in his eyes, but it died the moment he saw I hadn't moved an inch. He stalked back in, his boots stirring up little clouds of dust. He kicked me casually in the arm as he passed by. "Sometimes I forget how helpless little Hiccup really is," he told the man, giving me one of those soothing pats on the head that always got me to shut up and just lean into the touch as a child.

I could feel myself tensing the moment he touched me, and my heart leaped. Whatever he had put into my arm was beginning to wear off. A few minutes ago, I hadn't even been able to clench my muscles.

"Now, what is it?" Alvin played absently with his sword as he turned to the other man, leaning casually against the walls of the dungeon.

The Outcast lackey licked his lips nervously. "Hooligan ships, sir. They're very near our docks."

"How many?" Alvin's eyes suddenly glowed with interest, but he maintained his relaxed position against the wall.

"A whole armada." The man replied.

Alvin's brows drew down into a scowl.

"They're heavily armed, sir," the man reported, taking a couple steps back in case Alvin decided to hit something. If he did, it would probably have been me, not him. "Andâ€"

Before he could even finish his sentence, there was a commotion in the hallway outside my little dungeon.

"It sounds as though they've already reached our shores," Alvin snarled. "And you'd better get out of my sight before I make you wish for death. Get out there, and get me Savage! Get him to report to this cell immediately! If he is on the brink of death, drag him here! And then you get your sorry ass out on the battlefield and prove you're worth something."

The man nodded, running out of the room instantly. Alvin knelt down next to me and began undoing my handcuffs. I was so afraid that I thought I might start crying again, but I bit my lip to hold the tears back, which turned out to be wise; Alvin smacked the side of my head so hard my ears rang.

"No more crying," he snapped harshly at me. "You will listen to every order Savage gives you, and you will not resist, nor talk back. You got that?"

I was so confused and scared that I simply nodded obediently, unsure what to think. When I allowed my thoughts to stray to what Stoick and

his tribe was doing here, my mouth went dry.

"And once I've disposed of the rest of his tribe, either you or Stoick the Vast will tell me what transpired on Berk."

I still wasn't completely sure why he wanted to know about that so much; sure, he'd hated Berk for as long as I could remember, but why was he putting so much effort into finding out about it?

And then I realized what he'd said. He'd spoken of Stoick like he was going to let the chieftain live. That should have made me happy, but all I felt was terrified. On Outcast Island, death was always preferable to this life in the dungeons.

I knew it was too late for me, but why did he have to hurt Stoick and his tribe? My heart squeezed painfully, my eyes burning with tears. I had brought them so much trouble these past six months, and they had done nothing but care for me. I could never repay them now.

The door swung open once again, causing the tears to spill over as I blinked in the harsh light.

I expected Savage, but the person to come rushing in and the person who jumped on Alvin was Toothless. Pinning him to the ground, my dragon stood over him and roared something fierce, the gas building up in his throat as he prepared to launch a fireball.

Alvin was attempting to reach for his sword, but Toothless stamped, hard on his arm with his foot. I heard a bone crack and Alvin gave a loud grunt of pain.

"You beast," he roared, feeling around for his sword madly with his uninjured arm. "I'm going to make youâ€"

Then the door swung open again and this time it really was Savage, who took one look at the dragon and the man on the ground and began to run towards them, drawing his sword.

It happened so quickly that I should have missed it; Toothless growled, threw a fireball at him. Savage took one look at his fallen chief and ran out of the room. I don't think Alvin even noticed his lackey had run; he was still trying madly to get his sword while also cradling his arm and threatening Toothless.

I was aware of nothing but the fight until it ended. Snarling, Toothless yanked Alvin up in his teeth and threw him, hard, to the ground. The fireball he hurled had Alvin crumpling back to the ground, and, as his body began to roll toward me, I couldn't fight the slight tremble in my limbs when I realized he was dead.

As I realized that I was shaking, and that pins and needles were jabbing into my stiff body, I could have cried in gratitude as Toothless rushed over to me, nipping and licking and nuzzling. I raised my stiff and weakened arms and practically collapsed with sobs as I hugged him as tightly as I could, trying to ignore the corpse by my side.

"Youâ€|you came," I choked through my tears. "You came." How could I impress upon him the significance of what he had done for me and all the things he had risked by coming here?

And Toothless licked my cheek, and if it was possible for dragons to cry, then I could swear he had tears in his eyes, too.

The sound of running feet threatened to pull me back, but all I cared about was Toothless, who was solidly near me and who was never going to leave me. And he slowly nudged me up, trying to get me to stand. My every movement now tugged at the chains on the walls. Toothless leaned forward, trying to bite through the metal, but I didn't think his teeth were strong enough.

And that's when the door opened again and I knew I was dreaming, because Stoick the Vast took one look at me and collapsed to his knees in my cell. He made his way over to me on his knees and stared down at me in disbelief, his eyes filling with tears. As if in a trance, he slowly picked me up in his arms. The movement jarred my bent and bleeding wrist and a cry fell from my lips with no permission from me.

"I'm sorry," he whispered, tears beginning to course down his cheeks, a few hitting my face. "I'm so sorry, where does it hurt?"

I was dreaming, I thought, and my heart clenched painfully. Of course I was. Things like this did not happen to people like me. Why should Toothless come back for me when he had gotten away? Why should Stoick come for me?

Maybe I wasn't dreaming, I told myself, clutching at Toothless with my good hand, straining against my chains with everything I had. Maybe I was already dead.

And then, all at once, everything around me faded to black.

The last thing I heard was Toothless' low, long moan and Stoick's voice whispering above me, "I'm sorry, I'm so sorryâ€¦"

### 33. I'm With You Part X

Untold

Chapter 33 - I'm With You Part X

Summary: None

\*\*A/N: Um, so. What do you all think? Is it good...bad...okay? I'm kinda sorta having a love/hate relationship with this chapter to be honest. I like the way Alvin talks throughout the whole thing, but I don't really like what happens in it. I don't know. I'll let you all decide. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I had prepared myself. I had steeled myself for blood, I had been ready for injury upon injury. But what I wasn't ready for were Hiccup's emerald green eyes, clouded with pain and strangely unfocused as they stared up at me.<p>

I was ready for the blood soaking through his clothing, pouring from his hair, but I wasn't ready for the pain on his freckled face. I



wasn't ready to feel his ribs through his thin, torn green tunic. And I wasn't ready for the fear and hopelessness in his eyes.

There was a slight sparkle left, like a part of him wanted to hope, but didn't dare let himself. The part of him that still clung to innocence.

I was prepared to see blood and injury, and I wasn't even surprised by the tears on his face, falling freely from his eyes as he strained against his handcuffs to hold onto Toothless, but I had not prepared to see him. I had been working so hard, cautioning myself so much to keep calm when I saw the marks Alvin had left that I hadn't even stopped to think simply about seeing him.

His face was what pushed me over the edge, his eyelids fluttering like he had that night only two weeks before—my heart clenched. I remembered his eyelids fluttering that night too, flickering like he was fighting sleep. This time, I thought they flickered because he tried to hold onto consciousness.

He won the battle temporarily, his eyes opened just a fraction and he locked gazes with me. And then he slumped against my arm and moved not an inch in any direction.

I think I might have yelled his name, then, or maybe I did that in my mind. Either way, I clutched at him so tightly that my knuckles went white as I stared down at his face. Time and space stopped mattering as I gazed down at him. As I jostled him slightly, trying to fix him into a better position, he gave a frown of pain, of discomfort. I wanted to ask him again, where it hurt, but I knew I would receive no answer. Right now, I didn't think he was close enough for me to reach.

But would he be? Would he wake up and let me speak to him, let me apologize? Would he give me the chance to tell him that I was sorry, would he let me explain myself to him? Or would he run away again, like he had so much in the six or so months since he had been on Berk.

Every time I had tried to draw close to him, every time I had seen his guard begin to slip, he had yanked it back up again so fast, I had told myself that he'd never really let it slip in the first place. Every time I'd taken a step closer, he had taken three or four steps back. And I had chosen to believe that he would come to me in time, that he would stop running. And the day after he had, I had forced him to run once more.

But now, I wondered if he would ever stop.

His eyelids fluttered weakly again, and Toothless growled a warning to me. Looking up, I saw his eyes were fixed on Alvin, who was beginning to stir. I turned to the dragon, raising an eyebrow as I tried not to shift Hiccup too much, drawing my sword. I'd assumed, when I'd seen the still body of my enemy, that Toothless had done the job already. The dragon looked as confused as I felt, until Alvin rose up onto his elbow, and I saw he was bleeding. His clothes were covered in almost as much blood as Hiccup's, and this made me feel a strange sort of satisfaction. As he gasped in pain and pushed himself farther up, onto his knees, I noticed he was cradling his arm. His face twisted in pain, he glared up at me, but he still managed to

give me that smirk I despised so much. His gaze rested on the boy in my arms as he spoke. "Do you think you can take him away from me that easily?"

"Don't be foolish," I whispered. "You're in no condition to fight, Alvin." I wondered if Toothless had drawn enough blood to kill him. I wondered if his claws had pierced his heart.

The man gave me a choked laugh, displaying his dirty brown teeth. "That's what you think, isn't it?"

I hugged Hiccup a little closer to me as Alvin's eyes swept over his body again. Again, the Outcast chieftain laughed, an odd, cracked thing that didn't sound like him at all. "I guess you've figured it out, haven't you, then?"

"Figured what out?"

"I'm surprised family ties didn't mean more to you. Did you see the light at last?"

"What are you \_talking\_ about?"

"I was helping you." he responded quietly. "You know that, don't you?"

Toothless growled softly. Alvin's smirk only widened.

"I was," he insisted. "Why would Stoick the Vast ever want a runt for a son?"

"Youâ€|" I glanced down at Hiccup again, noticing that Alvin followed my gaze. I wasn't sure if he meant what I thought he meant. I had to know before he lost any more strength. I could tell he was already very close to death; how could I let this story die with him? "What do you mean?"

He laughed, low and sickening. Mocking me. "Do you need me to spell it out for you?"

"What did he ever do to you?" my voice was shaking. "I understand if you think, in some twisted way, that you could get revenge on me by taking him away, but really? What did he do to you? He was just a \_child\_."

"Child or not, he grew to be too difficult," Alvin sneered. "They ask less questions about prisoners than they do about sons."

This newest realization knocked the breath out of me. "Iâ€|youâ€|" And then there came a burning, blinding rage that made me want to hurt him in a way I had never wanted to hurt anybody before. "Youâ€|youâ€|" I couldn't even specify what he did exactly; all I knew was that he was speaking amusedly about Hiccup, talking about hurting him like it hardly even mattered, like it was a game.

How could he ever have hurt this beautiful boy?

I tightened my grip on him as Alvin spoke, feeling sure my fingernails were digging into his skin, but at the moment, I didn't care.

"He was too much trouble, too much of a screw-up to be my son. He asked far too many questions as he grew older, butâ€¦when he was younger, yes. When he was younger, he was quiet and obedient. I thought he was going to be the perfect pawn and do whatever I asked. Please know this, Stoick â€" I honestly never intended to hurt your son. I had things I needed from him, and I wanted to get them painlessly. I didn't want to spill a child's blood."

"But you did anyway, didn't you?" I accused, my voice surely shaking from rage. Why was he trying to paint himself in a good light? No matter if his original intention had been to harm Hiccup or not, he had done it. And that was enough ground for my hatred of him to grow.

"Only to train his tongue!" Alvin snapped, before falling back again, clutching weakly at his bleeding ribcage. "He may look like a runt, but he has the sharpest tongue in the whole Archipelago! I thought a boy as small and weak as him could be trained. I thought he could be easily taught not to speak his mind. I thought he was surely going to come around to my way of thinking soon."

I glanced down at his tiny, freckled face again, feeling a rush of pride at Alvin's words, at the realization that his small stature concealed a tough Viking with an unbreakable steel center.

"But that didn't work," Alvin spat. "He is his father's son, Stoick â€" he takes no orders and if he didn't have his stubbornness, I don't know what he'd have. Even as a child, he was like this. But I didn't want to hurt him."

\_But you still did.\_

"This little tale has kept you interested for long enough, I think," he said lazily, his eyes still maintaining that cruel glitter. "And I think it's been long enough. OUTCASTS! ASSEMBLE!"

And then, as I tried to rise unsteadily to my feet, the door burst open and Outcasts flanked me, wielding weapons and grinning cruelly from behind their masks.

## 34. Nightmares

Untold

### Chapter 34 - Nightmares

Summary: Set when Hiccup is twelve, shortly after Take it Like a Man.

\*\*A/N: You don't have to read Take it Like a Man to understand this, just so you know. Just remember Hiccup is twelve :) my mom really shouldn't have told me all that stuff about sleep deprivation today, and how dangerous it is...otherwise this might never have been born...\*\*

\*\*Anyway, here it is! I might rewrite it, but I did it in an hour, so...please be kind. Please.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>When Father first came into my cell and undid my chains, I assumed he was releasing me. He'd had a change of heart. He was letting me go. He was starting to see the truth about dragons, maybe, or maybe he just couldn't bear to keep his only son locked up like this.<p>

When he pinned my arms behind my back and shoved me along the dimly lit hallways filled with other miserable and dirty prison cells, I was reluctantly forced to conclude that this was not what he was doing. He shoved me forcefully, firmly. I noted that Savage was not at his side. Should this have made me hopeful?

Whenever he planned to inflict a particularly brutal form of pain upon me, Savage was normally with him. Now that he wasn't, I guess I should have been grateful, but I was just nervous. I tried to walk myself, but with him pinning my hands behind my back, it didn't make it easy for me. I stumbled and tripped several times. Each time, he forced me to keep walking, hauling me up by the collar of my shirt and shoving me bodily forward again and again.

He never took his sword out of its scabbard, I guess because he didn't think he needed to. As I grew older and he needed to move me from place to place, he would take his sword out then. The times he thought I was cleverer, more likely to hatch an escape plan. Sometimes I did try to run, sometimes his sword did prove necessary.

But today it was not, because I was quiet and scared and submissive. He was my father. I had been taught to obey him no matter what. I didn't agree with the things he did, and I would never obey him when he told me to harm Toothless, but besides that, I had always been relatively quiet. I had tried not to make waves.

Destroying whole parts of the village sometimes? Check. Running out during dragon raids sometimes? Check. Causing scenes in the Great Hall sometimes? Check.

But I was never intentionally making waves, never doing it to draw attention to myself. I just wanted to prove I was worth something.

Father's next shove brought me out of my thoughts; I hadn't even stumbled that time. I had been walking just fine, and keeping up a reasonably good pace. The shove threatened to send me sprawling, but his iron grip on my arms somehow kept me upright before I did.

When we reached outside, I took a deep breath through the nose. Summer air rushed back to me, the scent of long days and short evenings and Gust's voice in my ear and Halfdan and his friends trying to trick me into jumping in the lake even though I couldn't swim. My eyes opened again. Summers were never happy for me, but at least before this I had been allowed to walk around, go where I wanted to go, do what I wanted to do.

Now I was weighed down by chains, walking like a prisoner. Everybody who saw us emerging from the dungeons hissed at me, like I was someone ugly and shameful. Father swung me slowly around to face him, giving me an expression I'd only ever seen on him when he'd downed a

dragon. When the dragon struggled, completely at his mercy, he'd look at it that way, with that evil glint in his eye that let me know that a new head would make an appearance on his victory wall.

He dragged me over to one of the wooden columns of the dungeons, pressing my hands on the opposite side of the post almost tenderly. I don't know where he got the rope, but he must have had it on him. That would be like him. Always carrying some form of restraint, just in case.

I felt the ropes cutting into my wrists and I merely looked at him, not really sure what he wanted from me, and pretty much just too scared to ask.

He tied my ankles to the column as well, standing back to survey his handiwork. He frowned, leaning down to tighten the knot on one of the ropes restraining my wrist and then shot me a bit of a smile. "I know this isn't very gentlemanly of me. I apologize, I really do."

I stared up at him. "What are you doing?" I couldn't stop the fear from entering my voice. It was there anyway, surely visible through my pounding heart, my sweaty face. My hands were shaking in their ropes. "What are you going to do to me?"

"Oh, nothing." He responded simply, spreading his hands wide. I noticed he had drawn his sword. "You don't have to be afraid, Hiccup. I'm not interested in hurting you today."

He turned a bit, so he was looking out at the rest of the village and his smile grew bigger when he faced me again. "The rest of the village, however, is."

And that was all he would say.

\* \* \*

><p>Father did not come to get me that night. He left me bound there, and I stayed awake that first night, wide eyed and utterly terrified. I kept thinking he was going to come do something to me, so my muscles stayed tight and tense all night long.<p>

But when night gave way to morning and he had not yet appeared to inflict anything upon me, I allowed myself to relax a bit. I even allowed the fatigue that had come impatiently knocking on my door to let itself in. But I didn't sleep, because I'm pretty sure sleeping standing up is impossible.

I didn't try. I wasn't worried. Father would come and get me soon.

\* \* \*

><p>Father didn't come to get me the next night, either. When he had passed me by, on his usual duties as a chief, I had seen him and begged him to release me. When he had refused, I had begged instead for food. I was so hungry my stomach literally ached. I could tell my body was trying its hardest to hold onto the little energy it still retained from the last food I'd eaten, but it wasn't going to happen. I was fast becoming dehydrated, standing in the hot sun all day. My arms were horribly sore from being behind my back. My eyes hurt with how much I longed to close them, how much I longed for sleep.<p>

But my father would not show me mercy. He told me stiffly that this was my punishment for befriending the Night Fury, and that, if I was smart, I would take the punishment like a man.

These words were enough to force me into silence for the rest of the day.

\* \* \*

><p>Of course Halfdan and his gang came to laugh at me. There they were, pointing and jeering and shouting things like, "Hey, runt, haven't seen you in a while!" or "Damn, you do look awful!"<p>

My mouth was dry from lack of fluid and my stomach was begging for food. My body sagged against the post limply, and my eyes kept fluttering closed. But I could not sleep. I couldn't eat, I couldn't sleep, I couldn't drink.

"I wonder how much your precious daddy would care if we had some fun with you." Halfdan commented, a cruel smirk lighting up his face.

My dry, cracked lips were hard to push words through. "No. Please."

"The runt is begging!" laughed one of the other boys. "Are you so weak that you can't even take a decentâ€|what is this, Halfdan?"

Halfdan ignored his friend. "What was that, runt? I think we missed it."

"Halfdan, please." Maybe if I could appeal to his softer side, he would leave me alone. "Please don't do this." My eyelids fluttered again, my body straining against the ropes. I could barely keep my eyes open. My legs threatened to collapse underneath me, but they wouldn't give way because they couldn't. They were shaking horribly, but never moving from their place.

"Who's gonna stop us?" one of his friends asked, leaning so close I could smell his breath. I wrinkled my nose, turning my head away. My eyes flickered shut again. It felt like hammers were resting on the lids.

The first blow to my stomach was so painful that it made me cry out. I could do nothing to protect myself as more followed. I felt somebody grabbing for my shoulder, another person on my side. Halfdan grabbed my head and cracked it, hard, against the wooden column. I gasped, tears of pain springing to my eyes, my vision going hazy.

I tried to kneel, to work myself free of the ropes to protect myself from their fists, but it wouldn't work. Villagers all around could see us. We were in plain view. But nobody was stopping to help, because I was the runt and I didn't matter.

Tears began splashing from my eyes, falling freely onto the ground, my clothes, soaking my face.

"We're hurting the runt, aww."

"What a baby."

"Should we stop?"

"You can't even take this?" Halfdan's voice was in my ear, low and dangerous. "I'm so glad the chief finally saw the light. Can you imagine someone like this one day ruling us?" he grabbed my forearms, dragging me up, holding me up for them to see.

"Let me go, let me go!" I cried, trying to kick them, forgetting my ankles were tied in my fury.

"What a \_baby\_."

"I'm so glad he'll never be our chief."

They dropped me. They let me go. They let me slide back into place in my tight knots. Halfdan tightened them a bit, causing them to cut into my skin more than they already were.

I couldn't control the tears that were falling and I couldn't keep from sobbing as I stared at the ground, my face burning in shame and humiliation.

When they scattered, I think the tears fell more out of gratitude that they were finally gone. Another sob came out of my throat and I squeezed my eyes shut. A couple tears dripped out, onto my shirt. My stomach ached for food and from Halfdan's punch.

And when I allowed my eyes to open once again, I saw Father standing with Savage, shaking his head. A cruel smile lit up his face and he walked right by me once again.

"Father!" I cried, tears choking me. "Father, please! How could you let them do this to me?"

But it seemed that he had gone deaf. He kept walking, never once sparing me a glance. Other villagers stared openly, but he wouldn't look at me. Same slow, sedate pace. Each step deliberate and steady. Like I wasn't even shouting.

\* \* \*

><p>There was a burning at the back of my throat and something was ringing by my ear. My head throbbed so badly, whether just from a headache or from where Halfdan had smacked it against the wooden column yesterday, I wasn't sure. My stomach ached horribly, and, when my shirt came up from all my attempts at shifting around, I saw there was a forming bruise. I didn't think it was only from the bruise. I wanted food so badly that my stomach lurched whenever I smelled it.<p>

And I was exhausted. So exhausted that my eyes would close of their own accord and I would begin to sag against my bonds.

The straining of the ropes would jerk me awake instantly again, snapping my head back against the wood. The headache would become that much worse then and I would keep my eyes open for a few seconds, thinking of how much I wanted waterâ€|how much I wanted foodâ€|how much I wanted \_sleep\_â€|.

\_Snap.\_

The bonds jerked me back into reality once again.

\* \* \*

><p>Father's hands jerked me from my half dream-like state. "You look in bad shape," he said sympathetically. "Did you enjoy your stay?"<p>

"Please," I rasped as the tears began to fill my eyes once more.  
"Please. \_Water\_."

"Don't worry," he soothed. "We'll get you some food and drink."

"Sleep. Please."

"It's alright, it's alright." His sympathetic smile made hope rise. Maybe he meant it, maybe he really was going to let me have food and water.

True to his word, he gave me food. He gave me water. He handcuffed me back to the wall again, but this way, I could sit and lie down. I think I was on the verge of bursting into more relieved tears as they checked me for any serious injuries from Halfdan's latest six-on-one.

He left me alone and he let me sleep.

It's lucky I slept so much and so hard that night. It's lucky I got food and water that night as well. Because the next few days were filled with more painful hunger and thirst. I was allowed to sleep, allowed to lay down if I wanted, but even then I couldn't. My dreams were no longer the pleasant, imaginative experiences they once were. My dreams were turning into nightmares, just like my life.

### 35. Vikings Don't Get Sick Part 1

Untold

#### Chapter 35 - Vikings Don't Get Sick Part 1

Summary: Hiccup is sick and in terrible denial. From my own imagination, based off my sickness back in March.

\*\*A/N: Alright, this was originally my own idea that I planned to write wayyyyy back when I updated Casualty. Wow XD how time flies. I only received more motivation for it by two people, BlackBlood and Jesusfreak, requesting it. So. This is for them :) \*\*

\*\*Sorry it's not I'm With You. Can you guys understand? \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>The sunlight was too bright, and it hurt my eyes. I closed my eyes again with a quick groan, trying not to think about how much I didn't want to get up. It was late winter, but it was cold enough in



the room that my teeth chattered. I tugged the blanket up closer to me, snuggling closer to Toothless. My eyes slid open again and I took in the room, which seemed strangely blurry to my eyes. I squeezed my eyes shut instantly again, remembering how bright the sun was today. All I wanted to do was sleep.<p>

\_Be a man, Hiccup. C'mon, get up.\_

Reluctantly, I sat up, brushing sweaty strands of hair out of my eyes. I heard Toothless give a slight noise of surprise when he realized I was no longer laying next to him, but I ignored him. When I tried to exhale, out came a cough instead.

"C'mon, Toothless." When I spoke, it was a raspy whisper. "We gottaâ€¦gotta get to the forge."

When I tried to walk, it was more of a stumbling gait, and not just because of my prosthetic. My throat felt like it was on fire, and I couldn't swallow without pain. I could hardly breathe through my nose, and I couldn't smell anything, either.

Putting a hand to my forehead and feeling how hot it was, I sighed a bit. It was a common cold, I guessed, and I could take it.

All the same, it was annoying.

I tried to take a breath through the nose, and, finding I couldn't, tried to take one through my mouth instead. As I did this, I stumbled slightly, tripping over my own feet and closing the distance between myself and the floor fast. I landed on my knees at the bottom of the stairs, slightly unsure what had happened. I had been standing on the fifth stair and suddenly, I'd just wound up on the floor.

With a groan, I pulled my legs up to my chest, trying to gather enough strength to stand. The door swung open then and I turned, expecting to see Gobber asking me why I hadn't been at the forge hours ago. Judging by the position of the sun alone, I was sure his workday had started long ago.

Stoick leaned against the door to close it, massaging his temple with two fingers. When he looked up, though, his face was perfectly calm, the dark circles under his eyes practically disappearing with an affectionate smile. "Good morning, sleepyhead, I didn't think you'd everâ€¦" his smile disappeared, his voice trailing off as he realized where I was. "Are you alright? You didn't fall down the stairs again, did you?"

"Maybe," I choked, getting to my feet and swaying a little. Stoick came around behind me, putting his hands on my shoulders to steady me.

"What's wrong?" he whispered, studying me with a look that spoke of parental concern way too clearly.

"Nothing!" I tried to shoot him a smile, eager to get him off my back. The last thing I needed was for him to know I was \_sick.\_ Vikings aren't supposed to get sick. Then again, we're not supposed to get cold or tired, either, and I get like that way too easily. "I'mâ€¦" I tried to say fine, but I had to interrupt myself to cough. "â€¦fine," I managed when I'd stopped.

Stoick raised a disbelieving eyebrow. "You certainly don't look it. You look horrible."

"Thank you," I replied sarcastically.

He wasn't amused, but then, I guess it wasn't a joke. "No, Hiccup, you look \_sick\_."

"Vikings don't get sick!" I crossed my arms and glared up at him.

Confusion was apparent on his face for a second. He blinked and shook his head. "Hiccup—where did you \_hear\_ that?"

"Outcast Island." I mumbled reluctantly.

Stoick rubbed his face tiredly. "Well, in case you haven't noticed, Outcast Island is not exactly full of the best teachers."

"No, I know," I insisted. "But, really, they don't. And I'm a Viking. Therefore, I'm not—" I took a pause to sneeze. "—sick," I finished.

"So what would you diagnosis yourself with?" he asked, putting a hand to my forehead, raising an eyebrow in my direction. Drawing back with a bit of a start, he added, "Odin, Hiccup, you're burning up."

"I'm just under the weather," I insisted. "And Vikings don't get \_fevers\_!"

"Yes they do," Stoick responded stubbornly. "Now you need to get some rest."

"I have to go to the forge."

"I'll explain the situation to Gobber."

"I'm not sick."

"Yes, you are."

"I'll be fine."

"You're not going to work in that state. And if you try, I'll just tell Gobber to send you straight home."

He glared down at me for a second, waiting for me to try and find a loophole. I looked away from his glare. "Fine," I grumbled. "Then I won't go to the forge."

"Do you promise to go upstairs and rest?"

He had me and he knew it. I scuffed my prosthetic against the wooden floor, causing it to jar my stump a little.

In truth, the idea of rest sounded fantastic. I'd slept so late, but I was still exhausted. It wasn't helping that my whole body ached, and my throat burned.

But that was so besides the point. I yawned again behind my hand, shooting him a glare. "I don't need rest."

"Yes, you do," he told me stubbornly. "Hiccup, whether or not you want to admit it, you're sick and rest will help you."

"I'm not sick," I protested. "I'm just under the weather!"

"Either way, you're getting your under the weather butt back in bed," he ordered. It wasn't a request anymore, and there was to be no arguing with him.

I turned and stalked right back up the stairs, hearing his footsteps behind mine.

When I reached my room and sat back down on the bed, trying not to admit to myself how badly I wanted to go back to sleep, Stoick gave me a gentle shove, sprawling me out on my back. He gently tugged the covers up to my chin, ruffling my hair in a worried sort of way. "Stay warm."

"I'm a Viking," I mumbled. "I don't get cold."

I heard him give a soft, booming chuckle, felt him dropping a quick kiss on my forehead.

When I heard the door opening but not closing, I opened my eyes to see Stoick standing at the door, a faint half-smile on his face.

"Do you need something?" I leaned up on my elbow to ask.

His smile disappeared. "Oh, no. I was only thinkingâ€¦do you need me to stay?"

The idea of him hovering over me all day like a concerned mother hen made me wince, but I also couldn't deny a kind of warmth spreading through me when I thought about how much he cared.

"Oh, no, I'm fine," I responded. "Really."

The concern in his eyes never faded. He came around to the side of the bed again and hugged me tightly. "Justâ€¦be okay. Okay?"

"Yes, sir," I nodded with a mock salute.

He offered me a half-smile, sweeping my hair back from my forehead and putting a hand on it.

I rolled my eyes. "You do know I'm not on my deathbed?"

"That isn't funny!" He responded sharply. "There are all those diseases intruding from other islands, you don't know what this is! It could be so much bigger than a cold!"

Taken aback by his vehemence, I could do nothing but stare as I tried to find my voice. "Iâ€¦I was onlyâ€¦"

"Don't say you were joking," Stoick said, but he seemed to have calmed down a bit. "Hiccup, I lost you once. How do you think it feels to constantly be reminded that I could lose you again, at any

second?"

He kissed my forehead gently. "You're just getting hotter," he whispered concernedly.

"I'm alright," I insisted, even though I knew he wouldn't listen.

He left the room then, but just before closing the door, he peeked inside and whispered, "I love you, okay?"

My tongue tangled around the relatively simple four-word response. Even when he said it first, it was unimaginably hard to force myself to say the words, not because they weren't true. By the time I'd managed to spit them out, he'd already shut the door.

"I love you, too," I whispered to an empty room.

\* \* \*

><p>It seemed Stoick had turned even Toothless against me. Every time I tried to get up, he would shove me right back down, his green eyes filled with concern.<p>

"I'm really okay," I tried to reassure him, but this was followed by a long bout of coughing and I don't think he was convinced.

"Really," I insisted when I saw him looking at me again, "C'mon. Let's go flying."

But he would have none of it. He pulled me closer with his tail, nuzzling my hair with his nose. I giggled slightly from the tickle, but I realized he was attempting to lull me to sleep, and I tried to push against him. "Stop it, let me go! C'mon, let's just go."

He simply continued to nuzzle and moan, holding me tenderly against him as he licked me.

I could feel my eyelids beginning to flutter closed as the calming lullaby of his moans brought me closer to sleep.

"Toothless," I yawned, trying to be stern as I rolled over, allowing my eyes to close. "Stop it."

The last thing I heard before I fell asleep was a soft dragon laugh.

## 36. Vikings Don't Get Sick Part 2

Untold

### Chapter 36 - Vikings Don't Get Sick Part 2

Summary: Hiccup's fever has gone up and we all know what that means...

\*\*A/N: I really do not know where this came from. Any questions?  
\*\*

\*\*I'm still continuing I'm With You :) And this arc has nothing to do with that one, okay? This is a bit of fluff to soften the CRUSHING BLOWS I WILL DEAL TO ALL YOUR SOULS. AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"STOICK!" I think I might have fallen down the stairs again in my haste, but I hardly cared. Where was Stoick? I had to get to Stoick.<p>

When I spotted a great mass of beard at the kitchen table, I flew forward, gripping the wooden tabletop rather hard.

\_Oh, thank Thor he's here! \_

"Stoick, Stoick, it's in my room!" I was practically shouting, but I couldn't control the panic long enough to lower my voice. "Come get it away, please!"

"Get what away?" Stoick was instantly on his feet, drawing his sword. "Are you alright, Hiccup? Nothing's hurt you, has it?"

"No," I whispered, my eyes surely wide as saucers as I cautiously followed Stoick up the stairs. "But it's really being mean!"

"What is it?" he asked, carefully resting a hand on the door.

"It's dancing!" I whispered, the panic resuming now that we were back at the scene of the crime.

"Dancing?" he leaned too heavily on the door and it clicked open.

I let out a shout when I saw it again, doing that weird dance, smiling as it did so.

"Right there!" If I had had enough strength, I probably would have cut off Stoick's circulation with how hard I gripped his arm. "Make it go away!"

"There's nothing there," he said, giving me an odd look.

Was he \_blind\_?

"Can you not see the dancing grass?!"

"Hiccup." Stoick closed his eyes, as though scared for my sanity. Putting a hand to my forehead, he moaned, "Oh, no."

"What? What's wrong?" I looked earnestly up at him, awaiting his response.

"Your fever is going up."

My brow knitted. Since when did I have a fever? "Okayâ€|but what are we going to do about the dancing grass?"

\* \* \*

><p>The dancing grass issue was settled with Stoick â€" rather bravely, I thought, for I didn't dare to venture in â€" going into my

room, retrieving my pillow and blanket and allowing me to sleep on his bed for the rest of that day.<p>

Although I'd taken a nap for a couple hours, I was still so tired.

Toothless came up beside the bed, staring up at me with worried green eyes. Stoick felt my forehead a couple more times, tucked me in, checked the room for dancing grass " at my request " and gave me a kiss on the top of the head before leaving to go back into the kitchen.

"I'm okay, buddy," I gently reassured Toothless, offering him a smile. Pulling the blanket up closer to my chin, I watched the setting sun throwing odd shadows around the room as my eyes closed sleepily again.

"Wake me," I whispered to Toothless just before I drifted off, "if any dancing grass attacks."

\* \* \*

><p>I woke up to floorboards creaking. I could make out nothing but a large shape in the darkness and for a moment, panic gripped me as I tried to figure out who it was.<p>

When the figure lay down on the other side of the bed and I caught the smell of pinecones, the fear vanished as quickly as it had come.

In the dim light coming in from the stars, I could see Stoick looked worried as he bent over me, obviously expecting me to still be asleep. He gave me a gentle kiss on the forehead, brushing my hair back to see if the fever was abating. "Oh, thank Thor," he whispered to no one in particular, unless he knew I was awake, "you feel a bit cooler."

I smiled a little, mostly to myself as I felt his worried hands stroking my hair. Maybe I should have shown him that I was awake, and tried to allay his worry, but I knew it wouldn't stop him anyway. And, if we're being honest, it felt kind of nice to see how much he cared, even when he didn't think I was watching. Even when he had no one to prove it to, he still seemed to care. And that felt really nice.

I scooted a bit closer to him, letting him feel my forehead and ruffle my hair and just fuss over me like I was a little kid. I felt him pulling me into a tight hug and I surprised myself when my eyelids began to grow heavy again. I had slept so much today that I thought for sure I'd be wide awake at night, but this was not the case: I was already ready to sleep again.

I yawned, settling myself closer to him, his heartbeat beginning to lull me back to sleep. But he'd heard my yawn, and he glanced down at me curiously. "Are you awake?" he whispered, rubbing circles in my back with his hand.

I nodded. "Yep." It might have been a bit more of a mumble than a word, but I'm pretty sure he heard it anyway.

"How are you feeling?"

"Tired."

"You should get some rest." he said.

"I've been getting rest all day," I informed him, breaking off with a yawn.

"Yes, and it seems to have made a lot of difference in your condition," he insisted softly. "And you can't argue with me, you know I'm right."

"Hmph."

"Isn't it nice to not be afraid of the dancing grass anymore?"

My cheeks heated. "If you woke up with something like that in your room, I assure you, you'd be a \_lot \_less calm"

"I get it," he interrupted me with a quiet laugh. "Have you had any more hallucinations since then?"

I shook my head. "Although hallucination isn't the word I would use. That grass seemed very real."

"Well, we'll just try and keep your fever down so it doesn't come back to haunt us."

I nodded, giving another yawn. "If I have nightmares about dancing grass"

"Then it's my fault, right?"

"How'd you know?" I couldn't stop the slight smile that spread over my face.

"I was just about to say the same to you." he confessed.

"Oh, that's nice," I huffed.

He let out a soft laugh, ruffling my hair. "It's true. You could have had a normal hallucination, but no. You had dancing grass."

"Yeah, well, I'm not exactly the poster child for normalcy, am I?" The bitterness in my own voice surprised me.

"Well, yeah, but normalcy is boring," he whispered.

\_Not to me, \_I thought. \_I'd give anything to be boring.\_

"Besides, if you were normal, then you'd be boring." he teased.

"Mmm." I wasn't really in the mood for joking around. I turned away from him, hoping he would quit with the jokes.

"And I don't care about you being normal," he added. "And I wouldn't trade you in for a normal son. Not for the world."

## 37. Little Hiccup

Untold

### Chapter 37 - Little Hiccup

Summary: There was a reason behind Stoick's anger towards Humongous this time around...

**\*\*A/N:** Okayyy my first thing set after Starlight, Star Bright! Or, during. Whatever. xP Anyway, everything aside, here it is, for your viewing pleasure. I hope I kept Stoick in-character. He's such a tricky little fellow XP\*\*

**\*\*Furthermore** I want to post a new story so much but seeing as I have SO many in-progress, I need you guys to help me pick what to finish C: \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>The moment I spotted Humongous in the crowd, I wished I could turn on my heel and depart then and there. Unfortunately, it was my island he had washed up on this time around, and I knew I had to acknowledge him at some point.<p>

That didn't mean I had to like it.

In fact, that meant that pretty much every part of me was kicking and screaming when I reached the crowd and they parted respectfully for me.

"Humongous." The tight voice that spoke didn't sound like mine.  
"Another holed boat?"

Humongous' smile dropped a little. Good. I was tired of him expecting the friggin' Welcome Wagon every time he came here.

"I don't know what it is with my bad luck," he murmured nervously, eyes darting up to and then away from my face. "This is my sixth one in two months."

"What a shame." I tried to sound sympathetic, even if it was just a little bit, but it came out sarcastic.

Well, whatever. I thankfully only had to deal with him for a couple days, at most. He wouldn't be here very long. I just had to remember that. I'd only have to deal with this constant but manageable annoyance for a few days.

"Whoa!" A high, breathy voice filled with awe suddenly broke through my reverie. Edging slightly nearer to Humongous and trying to peer around Helga to see who it was, I saw Hiccup standing there, an expression of pure adoration on his face as he stared up at Humongous. "You're Humongously Hotshot the Hero!"

Humongous glanced around for a second, looking for the source of the voice. Finding no one at his eye level, he cut his gaze downward and saw Hiccup standing there, barely reaching waist height and he grinned. "And who might you be?"



"H-hiccup," the boy stuttered uncertainly, his face beginning to glow bright red as he tried to take a step away from Humongous, his eyes fixed on his boots.

Humongous' hesitation barely lasted a second before he managed to blink away his surprise at seeing a Viking so small, only highlighted by his name. "Well, then, little Hiccup!" he reached over and patted the boy on the head and my stomach tightened.

I could've dealt with that adoring look on Hiccup's face; I could've dealt with he and Humongous exchanging a few words. After all, they had never met each other, and Humongous was a famous Hero; sure they were going to run into each other at one point and have a conversation.

But the way he called him 'little Hiccup' and patted his head like they were old friends simply tightened the knot in my stomach, and there was a funny ringing in my ears. I'd felt anger before, and what I felt right then was very similar, but not similar enough. It was too strong to be the regular annoyance that I always felt whenever Humongous showed up, and I simply couldn't place it. All I knew was that, more than anything, I wanted to hurt Humongous, to force him to take his hands off my son, because it was my job to ruffle his hair that way, not \_his.\_

I gripped the hilt of my sword very, very tightly in an attempt to steady myself, but my grip became so tight and strong that I released it again for fear of breaking the hilt off.

Humongous turned to me again and said a few words I didn't catch in my fury, but I tried my hardest to unclench my jaw and ask him what he'd said. I knew I couldn't let my feelings get in the way of leading my village, but this was probably one of the closest times I'd come to disregarding that completely and doing exactly as I wanted.

Still, I tried my hardest to shove the inexplicable and unquenchable bitterness, or anger, or whatever it was taking me over, I tried my hardest to shove it to the side. I could figure it out later " not that it showed any sign of making sense to me anytime soon.

## 38. Reunion

Untold

### Chapter 38 - Reunion

Summary: A few bullies from other tribes give Hiccup some problems.

\*\*A/N: Okay! Special thanks to RazzlePazzleDooDot for parts of this idea! :D\*\*

\*\*Oh, gosh, and I hit 300 reviews? :DDDD thank you all so much!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I didn't plan to spend the day being laughed at, but that happens

pretty often when you're a runt. So, naturally, you can imagine that the Reunion wasn't that great of an experience for me.<p>

But first, let me back up. Stoick got the letter over breakfast and informed me in an annoyed way that he had to go to the Reunion the next morning. "They might have warned me a bit farther in advance," he continued in a rather irritated way. "I always feel like I need a week of recovery after one of these."

And then, I guess because I looked confused, he elaborated.

"The Reunion is the meeting of all the chieftains and I think, their heirs of the Archipelago," he explained. "It's mostly a way for old friends to catch up, and people who don't know each other to meet. A lot of the islands are pretty spaced out, and seeing as we don't really like to leave our homes very often, this was the best way to solve that problem. But," he groaned with an eye roll, "the Reunions are pretty awful and they last for the whole day. Not to mention it's an opportunity to run into the people you despise there."

I raised an eyebrow. "It's a meeting of all the chieftains? I don't remember Alvin ever going to one of those."

"Oh." Stoick sighed, rubbing his temple. "Of course not. Fights break out at these things a lot, but to prevent severe injuries, we decided to exclude the Viking tribes like the Outcasts and the Lava-Louts, the ones we can't trust. It's not like it helps, honestly," he added with a sigh. "Last year, five people were maimed."

"F-five people?" I stuttered.

"Oh, it is for the heirs," he commented, scanning the letter again. "That means I can take you."

"Maimed?" I repeated.

"You don't have to worry about that part," he responded with a dismissive wave. "Nobody's going to be hurting you."

"Do I have to go?" I asked.

Stoick hesitated for a second, giving a noncommittal shake of the head.

"What's wrong with me not going?" I demanded.

"Itâ€|it would reflect well on the tribe of Berk," he replied, clearly choosing his words carefully. "A lot of people have their eyes set on taking over the island once I'm unable to lead. With no heir, I look an easy target and the Reunions always endâ€|badlyâ€|for the Hooligans."

I couldn't imagine anyone seeing Stoick as an easy target. "What do you mean, badly?"

"Well, they know it's only a matter of time until I'm forced to step down," he explained reluctantly. "I guess they just want to speed the process up a bit sometimes."

"Why don't you stop going?"

"I can't do that," he responded stubbornly. "If I quit going, I'll make myself appear weak, and that, in turn, will make them think Berk will be an even easier conquer than before."

I glanced down at Toothless as I tapped my metal leg against the wooden leg of my chair. "Could I take Toothless with me?"

Stoick gave me a long look. "If you're going to come, you're not seriously thinking about taking the Vikings' worst enemy into a roomful of heavily armed chieftains and their heirs?"

Toothless made an affronted noise and rolled his eyes, like, \_I can so handle them.\_

The last thing Berk seemed to need was to leave a sour taste in any of the other chieftains' mouths.

"You have a point," I admitted, turning my eyes back to Stoick. "When is it, again?"

\* \* \*

><p>So that's how I wound up at this reunion, milling around and trying to look busy while thinking about Toothless and wondering if Gobber was taking care of him or not. I bumped into Camicazi, the heir to the Bog-Burglar tribe, who took great pleasure in listing all the tribes that had captured her and that she had escaped from. She also ended every story with, "You can't keep a Bog-Burglar under lock and key!"<p>

I quickly excused myself from the conversation.

I looked around for an excuse to say I was busy, just in case she decided to come back to me for another round of boasting when I caught sight of a rickety wooden staircase leading up into darkness. I glanced up at the space curiously for a second, wondering what lay beyond. Glancing around myself to make sure no one was watching, I slowly began taking the stairs two at a time.

When nobody stopped me, I quickened my pace a bit, reaching the top. There was no landing, only a trapdoor with a rusty latch that had already been broken. I fiddled with the latch for a second, weighing my distaste of social interaction against my apprehension to opening up creaky trapdoors that felt like they belonged in horror movies.

\_The tribes come here once every year, \_I reasoned with myself. \_If it led to something dangerous, they would have replaced the latch by now.\_

So I shoved open the trapdoor and shoved myself through. The floor was concrete, and I was standing outside, on the rooftop. I glanced down, watching all the other people outside on the ground milling around, tiny as ants. I leaned over the edge of the roof, letting the breeze lift my hair up off my forehead and I stuck one arm out, like I was flying. The wind gusted past me and I smiled into the breeze.

"Hey, runt."

The fantasy of riding on Toothless ended as quickly as it had started; my eyes flew open and locked onto a boy with thick, dark hair and a dull metal Viking helmet tilting dangerously far back on his head, worn like a baseball cap. He leaned against the rooftop, too, against the thick wooden wall preventing anybody from falling off. I mean, you could've climbed onto the top of the wall, but I couldn't think who would risk that for an adrenaline rush.

I remembered Stoick's words about last year's maiming, and decided to exit the conversation as quickly as I could and make my way back downstairs. "Hi."

"Who are you, kid?" demanded another boy, drifting forward. A couple others, totaling to about six teenagers in all, came up to me, examining me, looking me over.

"I haven't seen you here."

"Where do you come from?"

"Did you sneak in?"

"No." I responded. "Iâ€¦I didn't sneak in, Iâ€¦"

"Of course he didn't, Eyvind, he's a runt," sneered the first boy. "Runts are cowards, remember?"

"I was just askin', Gizor."

"Excuse me." Heat rushed to my cheeks at their words, but I tried to push past them. "You're blocking the doorway." I started to try to wriggle through the crowd of boys and get to the trapdoor, but the first one, Gizor, grabbed me by the collar of my vest and jerked me back up onto the rooftop. I fell onto the concrete with a painful thud, but nothing seemed to be broken, so I struggled to rise to my feet again. My prosthetic leg was buckling beneath me.

\_Of all the times for the thing to need reattaching, \_I thought angrily to myself.

"What's with the leg?" Gizor asked me, giving me another shove back down onto the ground. "It doesn't look too healthy, does it?"

"Like you would know," I responded. "Now get out of my way, I want to go back downstairs!"

"No way." sneered another boy, his dark blonde hair peeking out of his Viking helmet, pulled low over his eyes. "You just intruded on our turf, you know."

"I really couldn't care less about '\_your turf'\_," I responded, struggling to rise to my feet again. "Leave me alone."

"Oh, you hear that?" Gizor asked, smirking down at me. "I think the runt's trying to get away. You don't know a thing about invading our turf, do you?"

"The rooftop isn't your private property." I longed to throw a much harsher insult out there, but I was still hoping to make it back down

without incident. "Just let me go."

"Oh, yeah?" Gizor demanded. "Give us one good reason."

"Because I'm not letting you push me around." I managed to rise to my feet, glaring at them, but my leg was definitely not going to keep me upright for longer than about sixty seconds.

"Oh, really?" Gizor's eyes sparkled with amusement. "Looks like we are!" And he gave me another shove, sending me tumbling to the ground. My prosthetic leg ripped completely away from the stump, and the metal hook went skidding across the rooftop, far out of my reach.

The blonde-haired boy picked it up, a smirk pulling at his lips. "Is this yours?"

Heat flushed my face. "Give it back!"

"How'd you get it anyway, that's what I want to know," Gizor smirked. "A weakling like you? Tell me, did they do it to you because you're an easy target?"

The anger began rising, making my blood boil and it suddenly hit me that they truly had no idea how I'd lost my leg. "Give it back right now."

"What are you gonna do if we don't?" Gizor snatched it from the blonde boy, holding it out of my reach teasingly. "You gonna try to crawl to it?"

"You need knees to crawl, don't you?" Eyvind mocked.

"Looks like you don't have one, then," Gizor added, using the metal hook to swat at my stump. He didn't do it lightly, and the metal caused the injury to throb. My hands flew to the stump and tears of pain sprang to my eyes as I clutched at my leg.

"Did that hurt, runt?" he whispered, kneeling down next to me. I tried to ignore the pain, to make a grab for the leg, but he tossed it to the boy behind him.

"Give it back!" I yelled.

"Look, the runt's angry," smirked the blonde boy, taking the leg from the other boy and approaching me with it. "Do you want your leg back?"

I glared up at him, but I didn't answer. I wasn't going to give him the satisfaction of seeing me beg for it back.

"Well, do you?"

"Maybe we should throw it off the roof?" he suggested, dangling it over the edge of the wall.

My eyes widened. "No!"

His smile grew larger, and he tossed it to Eyvind, who dangled it just above me and yanked it back with a great roar of laughter when I

made a pathetic grab for it.

And that's what started the perverse game of monkey in the middle. Every time somebody got close enough for me to reach, I'd make a grab for my leg, and then they'd yank it away, or, when Gizor had it, use it to hit me somewhere.

He smacked it hard, on the back of my head once, and I fell to the ground, clutching at my scalp. Beneath the strands of hair, there was a knot already forming and, when I dared put any pressure on it, I had to bite my tongue to keep from screaming. The blow from the metal left me winded, and my vision turned hazy and orange for a few seconds before I fought the pain back. There was no way I was letting myself lose consciousness.

I clutched hard at my head, staying curled on the ground for a second.

"Runt?" Gizor sounded uncertain. "Runt, we've got your leg. Don't you want it?"

"Leave me alone." I commanded, but I didn't sound angry or threatening. Even to my own ears, I just sounded tired and sad. "Just leave me alone"

\_THUMP. THUMP. THUMP. THUMP.\_

Gizor snapped to attention, his eyes darting all over the place. "What was that?" he quivered. I glanced up momentarily, just as confused as they were.

The trapdoor's latch began to rattle and Gizor clutched my leg tighter, moving towards the trapdoor and holding the metal as if it were a weapon.

The latch rattled a few more times and then the door burst open and Stoick and Gumboil both came charging out, uncertainty written on all their faces. I wondered why the Murderous tribe hadn't been excluded from the Reunions.

Stoick's eyes traveled from Gizor holding my leg to me on the ground, leaning up on my elbow to watch and then he scowled. The bellow he gave then was so loud and terrifying that I wanted to hide my face again. "Get away from my son!" he yelled. "You give him back his leg, do you hear me?!"

Gizor backed away frantically, mumbling nervous apologies, his knuckles white from how hard he clutched my leg. He threw it in my direction, making to scramble from the roof to the trapdoor, but Stoick barred his way easily.

"You keep your hands off of him, you got it?"

"Y-yes, sir," Gizor quivered in terror.

"Out of my sight, all of you!" Stoick ordered in that awful voice, and the other boys scrambled down the stairs, pulling the trapdoor shut behind him, as fast as they could.

"What are you doing here?" I panted.

"Couldn't find you," he responded quickly. "Gumboil says you had a reputation for disappearing like this, it just got me nervous, I had to check. But never mind that, are you okay?"

"I'm fine." I stuttered uncertainly. "Honestly." I picked up my leg and reattached it carefully, forcing the straps back over the twisted and scarred remains of my stump.

"They didn't hurt you, did they?"

I shook my head. "Clocked me, but I'm fine."

"Where?"

I gestured to the back of my head, and Stoick wouldn't let me go until he'd checked the back of my head, fussed over me way more than was necessary, told me he should have thrown the kids over the rooftop, thanked Gumboil for helping find me and announced that we'd be leaving the reunion early.

Gizor and the others showed up at the next reunion, and the one after that, and the one after that. Always on the rooftop, always hanging out, talking in low voices. But the next time I saw them, they stayed well away from me. And to this day, not one of them has ever bothered me again.

## 39. I'm With You Part XI

Untold

### Chapter 39 - I'm With You Part XI

Summary: Continuation of I'm With You

\*\*A/N: This was done by request of Firenze Fox, who seemed eager for the next update of this arc! :D So this chapter is dedicated to her/him :) It's very short, but I hope they like it :) \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I was floating in a world of shimmering golden light, feeling entirely at peace. My head was spinning and my thoughts were fuzzy, which made me think I was underwater. Everything was bathed in that strange, warm light: the trees, the grass, the water that I slept under.<p>

Gray eyes peeked at me from the sky and I drifted through the lake, entirely at peace. The gray eyes called me up, but the darkness wanted only to pull me farther down. I really didn't care which way I went. I just wanted to keep going down this lake for a bit longer. I just wanted to let the water carry me away, and I didn't want to have to answer the call of the gray eyes quite yet, but I dearly hoped they'd stay there. I hoped this because they looked so warm and comforting and caring.

My eyes fluttered sleepily. And somehow I knew that even if I slept, I would not drown. I allowed my eyes to close, letting the water carry me away from the darkness below and the golden light above.

\* \* \*

><p>When I awoke next, I was anything but at peace. I was somewhere cold and dark, battle cries ringing in my ears, the clangs and clangs of metal-on-metal too loud, pounding in my sore head. I cried out, trying to reach up to cover my ears; my eyes were so heavy and they just didn't want to open. I think I heard somebody growling not far off, a strangely animalistic sound. I wondered if I should be scared.<p>

I shuddered as blasts of cold air gusted around me, blowing my hair back. The air was like ice, freezing my lungs, causing each strained breath I took to come out in a misty puff.

There was a sort of throbbing, burning pain around one wrist and I think something or somebody must have accidentally twisted the wrist, because I let out a scream and suddenly it was hurting much worse than it had been. I tried to reach out, to tear whoever was twisting it away, but my arms were tired, and I was weakâ€|

As darkness tried to pull me away, I fought against it. There was no more lake, no more golden light, no more gray eyes. This should have made me want to escape the reality, but I didn't. I wanted to stay here and cling on, because I didn't want to fall asleep alone, and wake up on my own and I didn't want to cry anymore, and I didn't want to fall asleep in a place so cold.

My scream of pain echoed off the cold, dark stone walls. The walls did not care for me, cared only for holding me in. The golden light did not care for me, for it would not shine. I think I begged it to come back and to not forget me, but it didn't happen that way. Whatever that strange light had been, it was gone now. I was left stumbling alone in darkness and cold.

I fought against the need for sleep, I tried not to let my eyelids flutter closed. And although my surroundings cared nothing for me, I suddenly sensed that I was cared about in some form, no matter how weak or forgettable that form was. Because warm arms were picking me up, cradling me, and a soft voice with a thick accent I could not place was whispering in my ear, "I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry, Hiccup. I'm so sorryâ€|"

Something kind of hairy tickled my nose and I tried to turn my face away, my mouth pulling up into a grimace as I did. I reached up slowly to scratch absently at my nose, feeling the heaviness in my limbs begin to take me over again.

I didn't want to go to sleep alone, or wake up alone or fall asleep in a place this cold. But I snuggled closer to the warm arms that held me so tightly, like I was a precious thing that they couldn't bear to lose. I buried my face in their chest, and I let myself fall asleep, feeling warm and tired and loved.

40. Time

Untold

Chapter 40 - Time



Summary: Time heals all wounds. Well, no it doesn't.

\*\*A/N: A bit of bitter!Hiccup :D done off the prompt 'time' and done in five minutes, give or take. Anyway, I deciddd to do a drabble for chapter 40! I hope you like! \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Time heals all wounds."<p>

It isn't true. No matter how much you say it, it isn't true. It's not true, and it doesn't stop your pain.

No matter what they say, time doesn't heal all wounds. Because the scars are still there, bright pink or pale white or dark red, a small part of your life imprinted on your body. Time has never healed my wounds. It's six years to the day Alvin gave me my first beating. My first whipping.

And guess what? Time hasn't healed my wounds. I can still hear him saying, 'I own you'. And I still cower before him in the darkness, every word he ever said still burned in my brain, every injury he ever gave me still lingering on my body.

#### 41. Vikings Don't Get Sick Part 3

Untold

Chapter 41 - Vikings Don't Get Sick Part 3

Summary: None

\*\*A/N: Okay, I got a couple things to clear up.\*\*

\*\*Number one, I am still continuing I'm With You. But I really, really hate action sequences, they are the bane of my writer existence and also I think I just enjoy writing random Hiccup/Stoick father/son way more than anything else, you know? I don't like being tied down to any one fic, which is why a story like this is perfect for me. Less stress. \*\*

\*\*Number two, I am GOING to get to your requests, WikiSorcerer, Guest and Jayalaw. I'm really sorry about forgetting them. It's hard to remember requests, especially after telling myself I don't want to do them XD\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"C'mon, just a little bit," Stoick pleaded.<p>

"I'm not hungry," I insisted.

"But you need something in your system."

"If I eat, I'm gonna hurl," I informed him.

"Not if you eat a little bit and slowly."

When I sighed, Stoick cajoled, "C'mon, you hardly ate anything at all yesterday, okay? Please do this. For me."

>I think I would have continued on being stubborn had he not added that last part. But that was what made me sigh and say, 'Okay' and take the bowl of broth from him.<p>

He gave a sort of tired smile, handing me the spoon. My hand was shaking with cold as I tried to raise it up to dip it into the bowl.

I took a small bite, surprised by how good it tasted, how much I wanted more. "Thank you." I took another bite.

"You're welcome." he whispered as I began to set the bowl down and scoot off the bed.

"Where are you going?"

"Oh, I'm thirsty," I responded. "I was gonna go get some water."

"I'll get it."

"You really don't have to do that."

"You're sick. Just lay back, okay? I'll take care of you."

I couldn't help the slight smile that spread over my lips at these words. I guess I hadn't heard them in so long, the promise of somebody telling me to relax, that they would look after me, that it felt nice.

So, although I wanted to be stubborn and get the water for myself, I allowed him to gently set the bowl of broth back down in my lap and push me back up onto the bed. "I'll be right back."

I nodded, picking up my spoon. "Stoick?"

"Yes?" he turned to look at me, one hand on the bedroom door.

"Thank you."

His eyes softened and he came around to the side of the bed again, hugging me tightly. "I'm doing my job for you, remember?"

"Last I checked, you didn't sign up for babysitting." He didn't laugh, but then I guess I hadn't been joking.

I set my spoon back down in the bowl. The clink of wood on wood broke the awkward silence.

He brushed the hair back from my eyes, and his gray gaze was sad. "Hiccup." he gently took my chin in his hands, a bit of a sigh leaving his mouth. "I just wish you would listen to me."

"I am listeningâ€¦" I began, but he shook his head.

"I love you." he continued softly, but his eyes were stern yet warm, letting me know not to interrupt. "But whenever I say it, you look so surprised. You try to brush it off with a joke, like you think I'm

being stupid. I just wish you could understand that I mean it and that to me, taking care of you is not a chore. This isn't something I feel obligated to do. I'm doing it because I want to, and because I love you. But you don't believe me."

I couldn't look away from him, although I wanted to. The gentle hand on my chin would not allow me to cut my gaze down to the bed. My vision went strangely blurry for a second, and I didn't know why. Was I crying? I blinked, not wanting to let him see my tears, but my eyes were dry.

"Would you care about me like this if I wasn't yourâ€"?"

And I broke off, a coughing fit overtaking my body, my voice threatening to give out from speaking so much.

Stoick jumped up and went to the door. "I'll go get that water."

I nodded and he let the door swing shut behind him.

## 42. I'm With You Part XII

Untold

Chapter 42 - I'm With You Part XII

Summary: None

**\*\*A/N: It was NOT MY IDEA TO BOMBARD YOU GUYS WITH TWO CHAPTERS. Blame THIS on RazzlePazzleDooDot!\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless and I made a reasonably good team. He blended in well with the shadows, blasting fireballs at any Outcast that so much as peeked into the cell.<p>

I couldn't fight as well as I normally could with Hiccup in my arms, but I didn't want to let him go. At least until Toothless gently picked the boy up in his teeth, holding him tenderly, like a hatchling. He leaned against the boy, supporting him, shoving Hiccup behind him. His eyes were fixed on me, silently telling me I wasn't the only one who wanted to protect him.

Now that I wasn't the one holding Hiccup, the Outcasts lost interest in me, turning instead to Toothless. The dragon growled at them, hovering protectively over the boy. I thought that the idea of facing the unholy offspring of lightning and death might be enough to make them pause, but they plunged forward without a second thought.

Alvin's victorious grin faded as he tried to sit up and join the fight; he was losing blood and fast.

I could see one of the Outcasts sneaking uncertainly over to Alvin, ignoring the battle, worried for his chieftain. I cut my gaze back to Toothless; he was holding his own against the three other Outcasts, but you could never have enough help. I charged in to help him, neatly cornering one and disarming him.

As I stood over him, readying my sword, I could hear Alvin yelling at the one Outcast who had abandoned the fight to check on him.

"Forget about me, Halfdan, just get the boy!" he screamed, blood surely still pouring from his side.

I plunged the sword into the Outcast, yanking it out again fairly quickly. As he fell to the ground, bleeding out just like his chieftain, I sighed, looking down at my bloodstained sword.

I was jerked out of my thoughts by the one who had gone to check on Alvin coming up behind me. I nearly didn't see him, actually; it was pure luck that I was staring into my sword and caught his reflection over one shoulder, Toothless growling a warning a second later.

I turned, my blade meeting the Outcast's, and I saw that he was only a child. He couldn't have been much older than Hiccup. Instead of killing him, the way I had the last man, still dying at my feet, I disarmed the boy, grabbing his sword before it could hit the ground and tucking it into my belt.

His gaze roved over me, and I could tell he was sizing me up, trying to weigh his chances. They weren't very good.

He curled his hands into fists, breathing hard, getting ready to attack me bare-handed (a feat I had to admire, if not for intelligence then for pure bravery) before another man swept him out of the way, and his sword came slicing down through the air to meet me.

I had been assuming that I had only the boy to contend with; I wasn't ready for a man's attack. I tried to block him with my sword, but he managed to give my arm a bit of a nick before I got the shining metal between myself and his blade.

Shoving the pain to the back of my mind, I turned my attention to the fight. I could hear shouts of pain echoing all along the dungeon and that was the reason I couldn't focus. I couldn't help wondering how many times Hiccup's shouts of pain had sounded in this room.

I wanted to look over at him, but I kept my gaze carefully trained on the Outcast in front of me. He launched forward with a snarl, and I blocked him easily this time, my sword already out and ready in my hand.

I heard Toothless growling, but I shoved it out of my mind. I remembered Hiccup's green eyes, so large in his tiny, freckled face, full of pain and confusion as he gazed up at me. He felt so warm and right in my arms, but undeniably fragile, so terrifyingly breakable that I thought I would shatter him so easily.

I pushed that to the back of my mind, too.

When I was a boy, my father had taught me how to fight through physical pain and how to focus only on the enemy. I didn't ever know how much I'd need to use it now, but it wasn't from the pain in my arm, although blood was leaking freely from the cut. It was the hole in my heart that was slowly growing bigger every second.

### 43. I'm With You Part XIII

Untold

#### Chapter 43 - I'm With You Part XIII

Summary: None

**\*\*A/N:** Well, I'm actually proud of this chapter. The reason remains hidden from me, but the chapter just feels sort of...deep. And personal. You know? Well, even if you don't - in fact, even if you're mentally writing me off as a fruitcake right now (you wouldn't be the first person) - I hope you enjoy! :) **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>In the days to come, it would be hard to separate dreams from reality.<p>

Lights always looked too bright, but darkness was comforting and soothing. Sometimes, I could hear what sounded like Toothless' growls, warning and protecting me in the same instant. I heard a lot of battle cries for a long time and explosions and bumps and crashes, noises that made me want to hide from the world.

And then there were noises of footsteps on thick wooden floors, of tense voices asking if I was going to be okay, and there was a lot of pain in those moments because people kept yanking at my wrist.

There was pain in other parts of my body as well and I felt somebody yanking on my left arm once. When I attempted to open my eyes to see who it was, I was rewarded with a blurry image of colors and a barrage of sounds that my ears couldn't yet handle. I closed my eyes again with a groan, and darkness overtook me once more.

And all throughout, the warm arms that encased me never once let go. And the moans of my dragon never once ceased. He constantly nuzzled and licked me, trying to get a response. I couldn't give him one from where I was. It felt like I was at the bottom of the ocean and water was clogging my ears, making every sound too loud, every color too vivid, every light too bright.

I could not respond to Toothless and allay his worries, but then I didn't want to. It felt almost nice that there was someone in this world who wanted me to be okay, and, selfish as it was, I never once tried to speak to him.

And I didn't want to let the arms that held me go, either. I didn't want them to let me go, so I clung to that feeling as well, the feeling that whoever held me was going to keep me safe. Just like Toothless, for some weird reason, this person cared about what happened to me, too. I didn't know why they cared. It wasn't like I was anyone special. It wasn't like they had any reason to care about me. They should have just stopped holding me. They really should have.

But the thing was, they didn't. Not once.

I snuggled down deeper into the arms, letting them rock me gently

into oblivion, letting Toothless' moans of worry be my lullaby. My heavy eyes squeezed shut, and the blackness was once again my only companion.

\* \* \*

><p>When I next awoke, I was somewhere warm and quiet and dark. A few candles shed their light in the room, and a crackling fire burned somewhere behind me, bathing the floor in a streak of light, but besides that, it was darkness. And those same warm arms encased me, and a calming voice spoke from somewhere above me. The voice was strangely choked, like the speaker was doing his or her best to fight tears.<p>

"Hiccup, I love you."

I inched open my eyes a bit. They loved me? Impossible.

Worried gray eyes filled with tears stared back at me. His voice was so distant. "Hiccup, please don't leave." I felt a hot tear drip from his face onto the back of my hand. I watched the teardrop with strange fascination as it traveled down the length of my hand, onto my wrist. Its journey tickled my skin.

It disappeared beneath a torn green sleeve. My sleeve? I wondered hazily, trying to turn my gaze back up to the crying speaker. I wondered why they cared so much. What did I matter? Why should they love me of all people? If I had given Toothless back the power of flight, then I wasn't worthless, but that didn't make me likeable. That certainly didn't make me loveable. Why should they care?

I closed my eyes as the light began to give me a headache.

"Please don't leave us, Hiccup," he whispered to me. "We all need you."

I squeezed my eyes tighter shut. For some reason, his tears made my own eyes feel a bit wet.

"I don't think Snotlout's gotten a full night of sleep since you came back." His voice was choked still, but he had a sad smile on his face as he spoke, I saw when I peeked up at him again. "He comes over all the time just to see you. Morning, noon and night he's talking to you. Come to think of it, I don't think he's eaten a proper meal, either."

A few tears began to trickle down my cheeks. Why should Snotlout care about me, either? He'd been nice to me, sure, but I didn't really matter that much.

"I'm pretty sure he'll only crash when you wake up."

I forced my eyes to stay open, wanting to speak with him.

He tugged the blanket up around me, tucking it around my chin.

I wanted to say something, but I couldn't even remember his name. "â€|Hurtingâ€|"

"You're hurting?" he whispered, drawing back slightly in surprise.

"What's hurting, Hiccup? Where?"

"My wrist!" My tongue felt thick and heavy when I tried to speak. "My wrist. It's burning." Tears began to gather in my eyes, from the pain. "It hurts so badly!"

"I'm sorry," he whispered. "We'll make it better, I promise."

I tried to lift my hand to take a look, but all I saw was a flash of white before his large hand encased mine, gently forcing it back down. "Let's wait til later to look at that, okay?" he whispered.

I wanted to protest, but my head was fuzzy and I just couldn't keep my eyes open. I wanted to fight the exhaustion, but I couldn't. So I closed my eyes and allowed him to tuck the blanket closer around me. I allowed my aching and burning wrist to be forgotten as I was swept back up into the sweet tide of sleep.

#### 44. I'm With You Part XIV

Untold

Chapter 44 - I'm With You Part XIV

Summary: None

\*\*A/N: Is that how you write fourteen in Roman numerals? I can't remember...anyway, I really hate this chapter. It just feels so aimless and stupid and blehhhhhhhh I hate it. \*\*

\*\*Also, I'm feeling really down and stupid, so I was wondering - do my stories have any merit? Like, are any of them legitimately good?  
\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>When Hiccup awoke again, it wasn't like last time. Last time was calm yet confused as he struggled to understand what was going on. This time he sat bolt upright, eyes darting frantically around, and he let loose a high, terrified scream, clutching at the blanket. The thin red material rippled slightly under his frantic fingers.<p>

"Hiccup!" I jumped up suddenly, releasing his good hand. I found myself doing less and less work these days when I came home at night; I spent most evenings sitting by the fire now, watching him sleep. "Hiccup, what's wrong, are you hurt?"

He stared up at me with frightened green eyes, his good hand slowly reaching up, clutching at my shirt. "Don't let him h-hurt me."

I thought he might have woken from a nightmare, so I began to gently brush his hair back from his head, my heart aching for him.

He buried his face in my chest, sobbing like a child, his shoulders shaking.

My arms instantly encased him, and I sank to my knees beside the bed. "Oh, Hiccup what's wrong?"

"H-he's always hurting m-me." he sobbed and then he began crying even harder, his words becoming less audible as his voice grew thick. "I-I didn't know what to d-do, because he's my f-father and I d-didn't know he'd react so b-badlyâ€|I'm his s-son, he's my f-father, fathers don't l-lock their sons upâ€|" and then he dissolved into fresh tears, his sobs growing louder.

My embrace became a rigid thing as his words reached my ears. \_"I'm his s-son, he's my f-father, fathers don't l-lock their sons upâ€|"

—

I didn't think I could hate Alvin the Treacherous anymore than I already did. I found myself wishing he had miraculously survived that debacle in the cell, just so I could kill him again. I only realized how hard I was gripping Hiccup when he pulled away with a few soft whimpers. "You're h-hurting me."

When his sleeve fell back, I saw bright red finger marks and I felt a hot flash of shame. Had I done that?

He sniffed, wiped his nose and looked down at his bad hand. He studied the bandage, tracing his pinkie finger along the white gauze and fell silent for a long time. I worried maybe he was quietly mourning the loss of his hand and so I put my hand over his, opening my mouth to speak.

"I don't even r-remember what it feels like to not be h-healing." he whispered brokenly. "I'm always h-healing from whatever he d-did to me. Th-there's always dr-dried blood orâ€|or bandages or s-salve or him tr-trying to get me to eat and drink again after n-not letting me for daysâ€|"

"It's okay." I whispered back, wanting to hold him close again, but I was scared and didn't dare touch him. All I could see in my mind's eye were the finger marks on his arm. "He's never coming near you again."

"And I d-don't know how to d-do anything anymore b-because everything I do just ends in another b-beating or a wh-whipping orâ€|or he t-ties me up again and d-doesn't let me eat or sleepâ€|" Tears spilled over again and he drew his knees up to his chest, sobbing freely. "And I d-don't know how much longer I can t-take it, he's a-always h-hurting Toothless andâ€|and t-telling me I'm n-not his son andâ€|" he buried his head in his knees, his shoulders beginning to shake again from the effort of his crying.

"Hiccup." I gently slid an arm around his shoulders, not trusting myself with anything but this slight contact. "You're safe, alright? You're safe and he's never gonna hurt you again."

"That's a lie!" he snapped, lifting his head out of his knees and glaring at me. His face was blotchy, and he looked furious. "You can't lie to me! He's always hurting me!"

"He can't anymore," I whispered. My heart ached with how badly I wanted his pain to vanish. "I promise. He'll never touch you again, never harm another hair on your head."

"Pr-promises don't mean anything," he sobbed. "People n-never keep



them."

"I will." I began stroking his hair again, my eyes beginning to fill with tears. But Hiccup needed me too much for me to cry. "I'll always keep my promises to you."

The moonlight illuminated Hiccup's freckled face, shining with tears. His green eyes were filled with so much pain. "I d-don't want him to hurt me anymore." His tiny arms suddenly found my waist and he tugged himself forward, hugging me tightly. "I'm t-tired of him hurting me."

"Well, you don't have to worry about that," I whispered, kneeling down to his level. I gently ran my fingers through his hair again. "I'm right here and I'm never letting him get to you again."

Hiccup buried his face in my chest again, his shoulders beginning to shake once more.

"I promise you, you're safe here," I whispered. "He's never hurting you again. He's never putting his hands on you again."

"I'm scared." he whimpered.

"I know." The hole in my heart throbbed for him. "And I'm so sorry with what you had to go through, but I promise you, you're safe."

He stayed very still in my arms for a long while and I didn't move him. I just kept stroking his hair gently, letting him cry it out if he needed to. "I'm so sorry with what he put you through." Was he even still awake? It didn't matter. He needed to hear this either way. "But I promise you that I'm here now. I'll keep you safe. I love you."

I felt his breathing beginning to slow, the rapid, shallow breaths he had been taking for the past ten minutes gradually easing. His breathing was now slow and even and he went completely limp in my arms. I slowly lifted him up, holding him gently, staring at him, holding him as if he was breakable. And he was. The finger marks were still frighteningly visible, even in the moonlight. I hugged him closer to me and a few tears spilled from my own eyes. "I'm here for you," I whispered, my one hand going back to his hair, beginning to gently run my fingers through it.

He took a slow, even breath, pressing his cheek against my chest, turning his ear close to me, as if he wanted to hear my heartbeat. And I stared down into his freckled face, feeling so much pain tug at my heart for him, feeling as if giving him all the love I had in my heart still wouldn't be enough for him. He needed so much assurance that he was safe, he needed somebody to hold him while he cried, he needed somebody to hold his hand sometimes, and what if I couldn't be there? What if I hurt him? What if I made a mistake again, like cutting 'traitor' into his arm? What ifâ€¦|what ifâ€¦|no. I couldn't think of it. I couldn't ever imagine myself hurting this boy, no matter how many times I had.

I studied his face again, remembering him pleading with me not to hurt him. My eyes filled with more tears. I didn't ever, ever want to hurt him. If anybody ever tried to hurt him again, I would hurt them. I hugged him closer, gripping so tightly I worried I might leave

another bruise, but I'd finally found him, after sixteen years of searching. I'd found him broken and guarded, I'd found him running scared. But the important thing was that I'd found him, and damn it, I was not letting him go.

#### 45. I'm With You Part XV

Untold

#### Chapter 45 - I'm With You Part XV

Summary: Continuation of I'm With You.

**\*\*A/N:** I love completely pointless chapters such as this one!...NOT. xP I swear, this arc is just becoming the crappiest thing I've ever written. I feel like giving you all, especially hiccup, the one with this idea, a big fat apology for forcing you all to read this. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>The blurry images that I constantly woke to made almost no sense.<p>

People asking if I was okay, worried gray eyes leaning over me, somebody touching me, my gasps as they touched meâ€| and then I was suddenly very cold and I shivered, begging for a blanket.

"It's alright," said a young voice above me. The voice of a boy. "You're alright, Hiccup."

"I'm cold," I protested through numb lips and chattering teeth. "I'm so cold, please don't leave me in the snow again, I don't want to freeze to deathâ€|"

The boy's hand went instantly to my forehead. "Stoick, he's burning up."

"I know." The one apparently named Stoick replied. Warm, large hands gently tugged something fuzzy, woolly and brown over my head. The cold fell back a bit as I snuggled deeper into the warmth of the thick fabric. Who were these people that Alvin had sent to patch me up? He'd taken me back inside very soon. He wasn't going to kill me, not today.

"He's had a fever all day." When Stoick spoke, his voice was sad. Why should he care if I had a fever? "That isn't anything new, Snotlout."

I must have had a fever because Alvin left me out in the snow too long. That happened sometimes. He misjudged how much pain or torment my body could take, and I was horribly sick for a few days, or my body took a lot longer to mend than it normally did. Sometimes, I would get people sneering down at me, trying to make sure I was still alive. I was useless to Alvin if I was dead, if he one day lost control and accidentally beat me to death.

I tried to force my eyes open to get a good look at the people standing over me. Their accents were distinctly northern, and Outcast Island was farther southâ€|but I was so tired and my eyes were just

so heavy, they didn't want to open.

"Will he be okay?" Snotlout, the boy, whispered, suddenly sounding very small and very scared. "I mean, Stoick, his handâ€¦"

"He'll be alright." Stoick responded, but he didn't sound like he believed it.

"Damn right he will!" A new, happier voice joined the conversation, and again I tried to force my eyes open. "He's a tough kid, and more to the point, he's Stoick's kid. If there's one thing he's gotten from his dad, it's gotta be his stubbornness. If the gods try to take him when he isn't ready, you can bet he'll drag himself all the way back from Valhalla."

There was a light chuckle from somewhere above me, and I smiled a little at their faith in me. "Tell Alvin not to worry," I mumbled, still smiling a bit. "I'm not deadâ€¦I can hear you allâ€¦"

There was a sudden and very long pause from the people above me, as if they were waiting for me to say something else, so I did. "Thanks for helping me, guys. You can go now. Alvin will start to wonder where you've gone off toâ€¦"

There was another silence, this one much shorter than the last.

"Hiccupâ€¦" And then warm hands were stroking my hair and this just made it even harder to stay awake. "You're not on Outcast Island, Hiccup. You're safe."

"Safe?" I forced my eyes to stay open for a couple more seconds. "No such thing as safe. Not for me, anyway. But maybeâ€¦maybe there's hopeâ€¦for Toothless."

"Toothless is just fine, Hiccup." The one with the red beard, Stoick, was saying to me. "He's right here, he's fallen asleep. He hasn't slept or eaten for days, we had to bring him his food here because he wouldn't leave you to go get some."

If you ask me, the three people above me needed some food and sleep, too; dark bags were under Stoick's eyes, Snotlout looked pale and thin and anxious, his eyes darting away from my face and then back up to it, as if trying to tell himself I was really there. And Gobber had a cheerful smile on, but it didn't look real. It looked like he was forcing himself to be happy.

"You guys need sleep." I mumbled. "You all look exhausted."

"You need some, too." Snotlout whispered and I could feel his fingers lightly skimming my cheek. "You look horrible, Hiccup."

"Thank you." I couldn't resist the smile on my face. "I'm glad you share my opinion. Alvin loves the bloody look on me, but personally I really hate it."

There was another, slightly stunned silence.

"Wellâ€¦" Stoick began awkwardly.

"Now I want to see Toothless." I announced, trying to sit up. "And don't give me Alvin's crap about how I'm not allowed to see him because I'm being 'punished' for making friends with him or whatever, just let me see him."

Another short silence, but Gobber slowly walked around to the other side of the bed. I peered over the edge, watching him scratch Toothless behind the ears. And then I looked down in confusion at the pillow and blanket.

"I have a bed?"

Stoick nodded.

"Alvin never lets me have bedding." I mumbled. "Did he misjudge it again?"

"What are you talking about, Hiccup, you're notâ€"

"He must have left me out in the snow too long." I nodded. "He probably just misjudged how much cold my body can handle, and pushed me past the limit. He should do it more often, I like having a bed much better than the cell. Where are my handcuffs?"

"Hiccup, you don't have any handcuffs."

"Really? Sweet."

"No, youâ€|you don't have any handcuffs, you're not on Outcast Island."

"Did I try to escape again?"

"No, Hiccup, you're safe, alright? Don't worry."

Before I could even begin to question him or tell him there was no way I was safe and that I spent half my life worrying anyway, Toothless put his front paws over my legs, leaned his chin up on my side, and offered me a gummy smile as he attempted to crawl up onto the bed.

"Hey, Toothless." I tried to lean up again, ignoring Stoick's restraining hand this time, raising my arms and putting them around Toothless' neck. "I missed you, buddy."

He licked my cheek and I couldn't help but smile. "Look, bud, they gave me a bed."

Toothless nodded, succeeded in getting his legs up and flopped down, half on me and half off.

"Useless reptile." I smiled as I tried to inch my arm out from under him. "I'm not \_your\_ bed."

He chuckled softly before giving my cheek another lick, and I sensed people reaching out to take us away from each other then. And that's when I knew for sure that they lied about me being safe, because if I was safe, nobody would be trying to take him away from me.

"No!" I clung to him tightly, and he opened his wings and shielded me

with them, ignoring the hands tugging at him, just like I was ignoring the hands tugging at me. "No, leave me alone, please don't take Toothless, don't take him, please!"

The tugging hands paused for a brief second, and I sniffed back tears, clinging to Toothless tighter. "I won't let them take me away from you," I whispered to him. "Not ever again."

Toothless curled up next to me, one wing sweeping over me like a blanket, wrapping around me like a thick coat. The calming sound of his heartbeat caused sleep to drag at me again with long, bony fingers.

"I don't want to sleep." I mumbled. "I don't want to have any more nightmares, Toothless."

He buried his nose in my hair, nuzzling me. His breath tickled the top of my head a bit. He fanned his other wing out in front of me. \_I won't leave you.\_

"Don't leave me, okay?"

I could almost hear him replying with one word in my head: \_Never.

—

I didn't need to see his expression to know his response.

"I love you." I whispered, feeling my eyes begin to fall closed again. I almost fought to keep them open, but it was fruitless; I couldn't stay awake anyway and I knew it.

He moaned deep in his throat, vibrating my body. \_I love you, too.\_

## 46. I'm With You Part XVI

Untold

Chapter 46 - I'm With You Part XVI

Summary: Continuation of I'm With You.

\*\*A/N: Again, a completely pointless chapter to pass the time. Thank God this arc is almost over.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I could still hear Hiccup's words echoing in my mind late into the night, his small, exhausted voice informing me that there was no such thing as safe, not for him. How could he have ever come to believe that? I remembered him begging us for blankets, pleading with us not to leave him out in the snow, not to let him freeze to death, and my gut clenched.<p>

It hurt to even so much as imagine the kinds of things Alvin had done to Hiccup, the things the boy had lived through. But it also hurt to remember his weary voice, his sleepy green eyes carrying just the hint of distrust. He'd been scared of us. He'd thought we were going to hurt him, maybe not then, but sometime in the future. How could he

ever be afraid of us?

And then, as I glanced down at him once more, I remembered rolling up his sleeve, cutting into his arm, letter after letter, cut after cut until I was sure I was going to vomit. When he had gone, I couldn't even look at my sword for hours afterward. I knew the blood still staining my blade was his, and I couldn't bear to think about it, to think about the hours he had spent in the forge making it for me, the hopeful expression on his face when he'd given it to me. Who knew it would be turned against him so quickly?

It made perfect sense as to why he would be scared of me.

It was normal now for me to spend my nights at Hiccup's bedside, never sleeping, trying to interest myself in a book or tending the fire when I knew every little noise Hiccup made would have me running right back to the bed. Every little stir and every inhale and exhale had me watching him anxiously for a sign of consciousness.

I stared into the crackling fire, listening to Hiccup mumbling sleepily behind me. The bed creaked worryingly, and I proved to myself that I wasn't yet immune to his background noise; I strode over to the bed to make sure he hadn't fallen off the edge. He was still snuggled up against Toothless, clutching at the dragon as if he was a lifeline, and Toothless was wide awake again, nuzzling Hiccup's hair with his nose.

I sat back down beside the bed, watching Hiccup slowly wrinkle up his nose, his eyelids fluttering. He might awake in a minute or two. I leaned over and slowly brushed the hair off his forehead, hearing Toothless give me a small growl. Ever since I'd done what I'd done, ever since I'dâ€¦|

I couldn't even think the word.

Ever since I'dâ€¦|\_brandedâ€¦|\_him, Toothless had been tense whenever I so much as looked Hiccup's way. We'd made progress; I was now allowed to touch Hiccup without warning the dragon that I was going to, and Toothless had even allowed me to hold Hiccup in my arms when he'd been having those nightmares last night. He'd allowed me to gently undo Hiccup's tunic and pull on the thicker, cleaner one, free of bloodstains. I hadn't wanted to leave him in those ripped, dirty clothes and Snotlout had volunteered to loan Hiccup his spare tunic. The boy looked very small against the overlarge clothing.

He shuddered a little in his sleep, wrapping his arms around himself like he was hugging himself. I gently stroked his hair back from his forehead and put my hand gently there, trying to guess his temperature. It wasn't hard; he was still so hot.

Toothless wrapped a wing around Hiccup, cooing worriedly, nuzzling the boy's neck instead. Hiccup slowly relaxed, surrendering to the dragon's gentle touch, and his pained expression slowly eased. For a few minutes, Toothless lightly ran his wings over Hiccup like a blanket and I saw a slow smile spread over the boy's face. He snuggled deeper into Toothless, his breath easing. Before, he'd sounded labored, pained; now, for a few seconds, he sounded at peace.

Of course, those few minutes of temporary, restful sleep ended and

his eyelids began to flicker again. His smile disappeared, becoming a frown, and he opened his mouth, as if he was about to speak.

"Hurtingâ€|" he murmured fuzzily.

"Hiccupâ€|" I slowly reached out a hand, locking eyes with Toothless. Silently asking for permission. His response came in the form of a grudging nod, but it didn't stop him from trying to comfort Hiccup in any way he could, too. Lightly licking his cheek and ears, nuzzling his neck and hair.

"My handâ€|" Hiccup muttered softly, his left hand rising slowly in the air, reaching out for his right, as if he thought he could stop the pain. "My handâ€|hurtsâ€|"

"I know," I whispered softly, trying to brush his hair back from his forehead, but he sat straight up then, eyes still half-closed.

"My hand!" he protested, a little louder this time. "My handâ€|it hurtsâ€|" He opened his eyes fully and looked up at me; I was surprised and wrong-footed to see tears there. "It hurts so badlyâ€|"

"I-I know." I stammered softly, gently putting a hand on his back, rubbing in a circular pattern. "I know it hurts, Hiccup, butâ€|but I'm here if you need meâ€|"

"Make it stop." he mumbled, but he was losing steam again; his eyes were starting to flutter closed.

"I'm sorry," I whispered. "I'm so sorry it hurts, Hiccup. I wish I could make it better for you."

He sagged against me, his head on my arm. "I'm tiredâ€|" he mumbled. "â€|And hurtingâ€|"

"Just sleep," I encouraged gently. "Just go back to sleep, Hiccup, you'll feel better in the morning."

"I never feel better in the morning." he whispered. "Things are always worseâ€|in the morningâ€|Alvin likes to whip meâ€|in the morningâ€|soâ€|so everyone can seeâ€|dusk is a bad time for whippingâ€|" he mumbled sleepily, and I felt my heart beginning to break for him. "That's what he saysâ€|says nobody can see me at duskâ€|says broad daylight is betterâ€|because then people can seeâ€|how weak I amâ€|they can hear me beggingâ€|"

"You're never gonna go through that again," I promised him quietly, but he was so far gone with fever that he hardly listened.

"But begging never does me any good." he mumbled. "A-Alvin doesn't care if I begâ€|says it's weak to begâ€|I don't beg him anymore." he slowly lifted his head from my arm and blinked up at me. "He can't have my dignityâ€|it's the only thing I have leftâ€|"

"Oh, Hiccup." I sighed, gently sinking back down into the chair.

"No!" he clutched tightly at me with his good hand. "Don't you leave me, too!"

"I won't." I gently pulled him into my lap, glancing up once at Toothless. He was watching me warily, but he nodded. "Not ever, I promise."

"Okay." he nodded, letting his head fall back onto my arm. "My handâ€¦it doesn't hurt anymore."

## 47. Loss

Untold

### Chapter 47 - Loss

Summary: Set before To Be Loved the Way You Love Me. In which Stoick remembers that it's the day his wife and son died and at last enters the bedroom that was intended for his son.

**\*\*A/N:** Why was I in such a heartbreaking mood tonight? I guess because I feel kinda down myself...anyway, thank you guys for the reviews. I'll try not to put myself down here too much anymore...I think it's the I'm With You arc that's the problem. I despise it.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>The door creaked slowly as I entered the bedroom, looking around at the empty place. There was a bed in the corner, a blanket folded neatly over it, a pristine, dark red pillow still fixed at the head. The bed had never been used, and it was now covered with dust. I walked slowly forward, listening to my boots creaking on the wooden floor beneath me. I gently skimmed a finger over the thick dust, watching it rise up into the air and swirl around in front of the window.<p>

My eyes traveled to the view outside; snow still lay upon the ground, though it was definitely thinning, and nobody in those little houses down in the village would even remember what today was by now. Maybe Gobber still thought about it in passing today, but he wouldn't dwell on it, not the way I was. I slowly sank to the floor, feeling the tears build up in my eyes. It had been sixteen long years, and the hole in my heart never mended, never went away.

I still remembered sitting in the living room of my home on this day, sixteen years prior, holding my wife's hand, watching the midwife slowly wrapping the boy in a blanket. She looked down at the infant, all bundled up and she gasped in horror, staring down at him. "Stoickâ€¦Valhallaramaâ€¦I'm so sorryâ€¦" she let the bundle slowly fall into her lap. "A stillborn."

I still remembered Val gasping in horror, struggling to sit up, to reach her baby boy. But she was weakened from the birth, and she fell back with a great gasp, her hand shaking in mine. She glanced up at me, the light beginning to fade from her eyes. \_I had known then that she was about to leave me, too, but I couldn't bear to lose her, so I clung to her hand.\_

"\_I'll set him out to sea," the midwife whispered, taking to her feet slowly. "I can see you two would rather be alone."\_



"\_Wait." I didn't try to stop the tears that fell from my eyes.  
"Don't. Don't set him out to sea yet. I want to see him."\_

"Please, sir." She clutched at the bundle tightly, as if frightened I would break him if I held him. "You're maddened by grief, I don't think you could handle it."

"I want to see my son." I insisted, trying to rise to my feet, but refusing to let go of her hand. "Please let me see him. I just want to hold him."

"Stoickâ€|" And then Val's weak, raspy voice recaptured my attention completely, and for a few moments I forgot about the child in her arms as I spoke quietly with my wife, watching the light fade from her eyes.

And all that time, the midwife edged closer and closer to the door, and when my emotions got the best of me and I began to truly cry, the midwife softly whispered that I was too overcome to see my boy, and she raced out of the house to set him out to sea.

Tears leaked out of my eyes, and I squeezed them shut. I still remembered that day, the memory especially vivid on days like this one. These days were the things that kept me from forgetting the pain of losing my only family.

## 48. Good Night

Untold

### Chapter 48 - Good Night

Summary: Chapter 27 of To Be Loved the Way You Love Me, from Stoick's POV.

**\*\*A/N:** This chapter means a lot to me. It feels really personal. I originally never planned to share it with anyone, but I wanted to show the difference in Stoick's character. In chapter 47, he's in tears and grieving his family and just completely breaking down. He's surviving, not really living. When Hiccup crashes on Berk, it's more of a rude shock than anything. And then when Hiccup becomes more like a son to him, and begins seeing Stoick like a father figure, it makes Stoick happier than he's ever been. He's finally got his family back, or a piece of it, anyway, and it just makes him feel indescribable joy. Hence why he describes Hiccup as "beautiful" a few times in this chapter. That's truly what loss has made Hiccup to Stoick - beautiful. Because to Stoick, family is the one of the most beautiful and precious things. **\*\***

**\*\*Secondly,** this chapter mostly feels personal because of the song I wrote it to as well as the content. It doesn't have any lyrics, the song doesn't, but it's called "Midnight Dancers" by Adrian Von Ziegler. I realize it's intended to inspire romantic thoughts, but all it does is make my mind wander. I don't think of couples when I think of it. It reminds me of the indescribable joy Stoick feels at having Hiccup, at knowing the boy is his son, at having someone to love and protect, especially after that feeling was ripped from him.  
**\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I had never known beauty until this night. And I had seen a lot in my lifetime.<p>

But never had I seen, or even imagined, what it might look like when Hiccup's guard came completely down, when the rigidity in his shoulders relaxed, when the smile on the corner of his lip was genuine. With all the tension gone from his face, it was almost impossible for me to believe he was sixteen.

He slumped against the table, head resting on his arms, but I knew from experience that that position was anything but comfortable.

He let out a little sigh and I gently picked him up, clasping my arms around his skinny waist, positioning him in my arms.

How was it that I had never known joy until this moment, solely ours, as I stared down at him, our hearts beating nearly in sync?

His slow, even breathing was reassuring and relaxing, causing me to tighten my grip on him.

I turned my attention to the stairs. I probably should have just brought him back to the forge, but I remembered how frigid that building was in the wintertime, and I drew closer to the stairs instead.

My movement caused Hiccup to stir slightly in my arms. I half-expected him to awake and protest, but all he did was snuggle closer to me.

The joy that I felt in these moments was unmatched. I don't think that I had ever loved anybody as deeply as I began to love the beautiful boy in my arms. I marveled at the way his heart beat slowly and evenly, like each breath he took as I walked up the stairs. His tiny fingers found their way onto my shirt, and he clung to me like a child. He mumbled, barely audible, "What's going on?"

"Shh." I whispered gently. "Go back to sleep, Hiccup."

I thought that would be easy for him, with how hard he seemed to be fighting to keep his eyes open, but he lay there, fully awake for a couple long seconds, before snuggling closer to me again. I felt the tight tension between his thin shoulder blades easing as sleep began to tug at him once more.

I reached the top of the staircase then, gently pushing open his door with one hand, holding him with the other. I crossed the room, putting him down carefully on the bed, tugging the blanket closer to him.

Although it was thicker than most Viking blankets, it was still thin and ragged. He shivered slightly, and I looked around, wondering if there was anything I could give him to keep him warm. As I looked, my cloak swung out with me and I smiled, easing it off my shoulders.

I let it drop over him, watching as his eyes fluttered open, slightly shocked.

"Good night." I whispered.

He blinked sleepily again, and my hesitation seemed silly. It wasn't like he was even going to remember this tomorrow.

"Son," I added quietly. Even with my sudden courage in the darkness, it came out barely above a whisper.

He yawned widely, reaching up to tug the blankets closer to him. Out of all the sleepy mumbles he had given that night, he sounded fully conscious when he whispered, "Good night, Dad."

A gasp found its way out of my mouth. He didn't just say thatâ€¦did he?

I stared down at him for another long second, waiting for the sign that meant that I'd imagined everything.

But nothing more was said. He yawned again and this time, he did allow sleep to overtake him. So I forced myself down the stairs, not even sure what to think anymore.

He'd just called me 'dad'. The single word repeated itself in my head and I couldn't be sure whether the reason my heart was swelling in that moment was from pain or joy. All I knew was that, right then, that name could not have been more appropriate. Because the only thing I truly wanted right then, was to be his dad.

#### 49. I'm With You Part XVII

Untold

Chapter 49 - I'm With You Part XVII

Summary: Continuation of I'm With You

**\*\*A/N:** Hey, guys :) I actually LIKE this chapter, even though the ending feels horribly awkward...I'm kinda on a deadline, I'm being called away from the computer, so the ending was sudden and cliffieish.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I woke slowly, in a very warm place. I didn't open my eyes, struggling to remember everything that had happened. My head began to pound with the beginnings of a nasty headache when I tried to remember anything past landing on Berkâ€¦I remembered Stoick's warm arms around me, slowly carrying me up to bedâ€¦and then nothing more. I groaned softly to myself, before becoming aware of a soft voice from somewhere above me, and a large hand gently brushing my hair back off my forehead.<p>

"Lay down to rest, my dear." The voice was quiet, but I could tell the person wasn't speaking, more like singing, a very soft, very soothing lullaby. "Don't think of tomorrow," the voice continued gently. "Though we part, I will think of you."

I wanted to open my eyes, but at the same time, all I wanted was to

go back to sleep.

"\_I'll keep you always in my heart, \_  
\_Wherever you may be,\_  
\_I will be thinking of you,\_  
\_Watching over you, through the mist,\_  
\_Wherever you are, \_  
\_Wherever you may be,\_  
\_Pleaseâ€¦pleaseâ€¦" \_

I slowly let my eyes open just a fraction of an inch, hoping to catch a glimpse of the singer. Worried gray eyes filled with tears stared back at me.

"\_Come back to me."\_

I squeezed my eyes shut again and I sensed the person leaning down carefully, I felt them pressing their lips to my forehead and I heard them whisper, "Hiccup, just please come back to me."

And the utter sadness with which they spoke had me fighting against the exhaustion and forcing myself to open my eyes, because I knew now that that heavy accent was Stoick's, that those gray eyes belonged to him. "M'here," I mumbled weakly.

He paused for a moment, his lips still pressed to my head. He slowly pulled away and looked down at me and I opened my eyes fully and tried to sit up. "I'm here."

He gave me a sort of sad smile. "I know."

"Let me up." I mumbled, trying to kick the blankets off.

"Hiccup, you need to stay down." he put a gentle hand on my chest, pushing me easily back down onto the bed, never once using force. "You need to rest."

"I'm fine," I tried to smile at him to prove my point. "Honest, I am."

"It is a good sign that your fever's broken," he admitted softly.

My smile disappeared. "When did I have aâ€¦"

I suddenly remembered: Stoick towering over me with his sword, his gray eyes flashing with hurt and anger, his sword pressing into the skin of my armâ€¦I winced, my hand instantly traveling to my arm. I touched something thick and white and stared down at the gauzy bandage. "I should go." I tried to stand again, succeeding only in getting the blankets off my legs this time before Stoick pushed me back down.

"Hiccupâ€¦"

"Let me go!" I tried to push against him, but I was weak, and my bandaged arm didn't seem to want to work. "Let me go and I'll be out of your hair, sir, I promise." \_Just please don't kill me.\_

And then I remembered Alvin's sneering face in the darkness, Stoick's look of utter disgust when I'd climbed onto the boat. And the memory made me flinch.

"Hiccup, please," he had more tears building in his eyes, I could see. "Just listen to me for one second, and then I'll let you leave, I'll let you do whatever you want."

I wanted to run from the house as fast as my weak and trembling legs could carry me, I wanted to find Toothless and take off into the sky as fast as I could. But Stoick was stronger than I was, and faster, and now would not be a good time to resist. I slowly nodded, allowing him to settle me back down on the bed. The desire for sleep when he gently covered me back up with the blanket surprised me.

"Listen, Hiccup." He gently brushed my hair out of my eyes, an expression I couldn't define coming into his eyes. "Iâ€¦I want you to know that I'm sorry. I'm sorry for everything I did. I'm so, so sorry for hurting you." His words should have been meaningless, but his tone was so sincere that I wavered.

"It's okay." It was okay, but I would never let myself forget. No more trusting him. No more giving him any pieces of me, not ever. I was leaving soon, just as soon as he finished up this apology. And I was never looking back. "I understand."

"No, Hiccup, I'm not asking you to understand."

"Then what are you asking of me?" I turned my eyes to meet his, wishing I could understand whatever it was he wanted me to. I leaned forward, putting my hands on the bed to steady myself and lean up. But when my bandaged hand hit the wood, I had to glance down to make sure the roaring fire on my wrist existed only in my nerve endings. I'm pretty sure I gave a slight cry of pain, because Stoick's gaze followed mine and softened.

"Hiccup, Iâ€¦I'm so sorry, Iâ€¦"

"Why is my hand bandaged?" I demanded, glancing down at the thick gauze. "What happened to it?"

He took a slow breath. "Hiccupâ€¦"

"\_What happened to my hand\_?"

## 50. I'm With You Part XVIII

Untold

Chapter 50 - I'm With You Part XVIII

Summary: "I'll always care about you, Hiccup. Forever and always."

\*\*A/N: Frick. Another pretty dumb chapter. I'm sorry. Please forgive

me. Maybe the next one will be better.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Hiccupâ€| " Stoick's mouth dragged down at the corners as he reached out a hand to slowly set it on my shoulder.<p>

I flinched at the unexpected contact, and he took his hand away again. I wanted to tell him it wasn't that I didn't want him to touch me, I just hadn't expected it. But then I pressed my lips together, reminding myself of the promise I'd made â€" no more pieces of me. I refused to say anything.

"Your hand, it'sâ€|what do you remember?"

"Uhâ€|a lot of stuff from Outcast Island?"

"But you don't remember what happened to your hand?"

"Noâ€|" My voice trailed off and I wracked my brain, but I couldn't remember anything.

"I'm sorryâ€|" His voice seemed to come from very far away as I tried to rememberâ€| "We tried to save it, Hiccup, but there really was no wayâ€|Alvin had done too much damage to the bone by the time we'd arrived."

And then it suddenly came rushing back with frightening clarity, and I stared up at him in horror. I wanted to make him stop talking, but I couldn't make my mouth move.

"Gobber's making you a prosthetic now."

Gobber? At this point, my mind was latching onto anything familiar.

"He's been through this before," Stoick whispered. "He understands."

How could anybody understand what I was feeling?

"I'm so sorry," he whispered. "I can't imagine how hard this must be for you."

And he was being so nice and understanding and apologetic and I couldn't help thinking about my hand which was \_gone,\_ and, to my embarrassment, tears began to prick at my eyes. I refused to let them fall. I could cry as much as I wanted as I flew away, but not yet, not here. Not in front of Stoick. No more pieces of me.

His eyes were still on me, I reminded myself quickly. I couldn't show emotion just yet. "No, you can't," I responded. "Now, I'm gonna go, if you don't mind."

"Hiccup, wait." Stoick grabbed my wrist before I could get up from the bed. "Don't leave."

"Thank you for curing me while I was asleep." I told him, in the most respectful voice I could muster, but inside I was breaking. I didn't want to say no, to refuse his offer, but I knew I had to. "But I need

to get a move on."

"Hiccup, your injuriesâ€¦" Stoick began, his eyes flicking down to my hand again. "It wouldn't be a good idea to try and leave without having them healed."

"They're fine."

"Your hand was hacked off at the wrist!" Stoick took to his feet, still holding my good hand, encasing it completely in his huge one. "You're not ready to leave! You need to keep that bandage clean, the injury washed, the wound tended! You can't do that when you're on your own."

"I've looked after myself for sixteen years!" I snapped. "Thor knows I could do it again!"

"It's not a good idea to try."

"Why do you even care?" I took my good hand away from Stoick, putting it on the bedpost, trying to lean up on it. My legs were shaking horribly and they didn't want to move.

I heard him sigh somewhere behind me, but I didn't turn to look. "I care about you, Hiccup." He whispered. I heard the creak of wood as he gently shimmied past the bed, trying to reach me. "That's why I care."

"You branded me." My breathing was hard and labored as I managed to pull myself into a standing position. All the bruises and injuries begged me to fall back down on the bed, but I didn't want to. I wasn't going to. "Now I'm leaving."

"You're going to get hurt out there," he warned me, taking my good hand and kneeling down to look me in the eye. "Please listen to me and stay here until your hand is better."

"Like you just said, it was hacked off," I snapped, trying to take my hand away from him again. This time, he wouldn't let go. "It's gonna take months for it to heal, I'm not staying here that long."

"Then a week," he pleaded, brushing my hair back from my eyes.

I refused to let myself crave his touch. "That's longer than I'd like. I'm leaving."

"You won't even stay until tomorrow morning?"

It was pitch black outside the windows, and I noticed this for the first time.

"I remember when Gobber lost his hand," Stoick said gently, tilting my chin so I had to look at him. "And he slept so much and was in so much pain. You need rest, otherwise your condition will never improve."

"I'll rest."

"The ground is no place for injuries. You could get it dirty. The last thing you want is dirt on your bandage or dirt in your wound. It

could wind up in your bloodstream."

He was smarter than I thought, I seethed silently to myself as I glared up at him. "I've dealt with infection before."

"Not with an amputated hand."

"With a wounded hand."

"That's not the same thing. You need to rest."

"I'll rest."

"When?"

"Whenâ€"

"You've driven yourself to exhaustion?"

"I'm doing fine. Let me by."

"Hiccup, you're going to get seriously hurt out there! Do you know how much harm could come to a teenage boy?"

"With a dragon." I added.

"Toothless doesn't matter!" Stoick scowled. "You could still get so hurt\_â€|"

"Look, what happened to make you my mother?" I folded my arms across my chest and glared at him, trying not to wince when my bandaged hand took the impact.

His gaze turned suddenly, inexplicably, sad. "About thatâ€|" his eyes flicked towards the floor and he gently took my good hand, tugging me away from the door, over to the bed. When he reached the bed, he carefully released my hand, pushing me gently onto the edge. He sat down in the chair beside the bed and took his Viking helmet off, setting it on the bookshelf behind him.

"About that?" I pressed, when it seemed he wasn't going to speak.

"Hiccup, the thing about that isâ€|" Stoick hesitated. "How do you think you'd react if you found out thatâ€|that Alvin wasn't your father?" he offered me a hopeful look.

For a second, I blinked at him, confused. "Well, doesn't matter, he is whether or not Iâ€|" and then I dropped my head. "Odin, I've been stupid."

"Iâ€|"

"I really have." I lifted my head and looked right at him, raising an eyebrow. "The dinners at your house, Gobber being so nice, you liking me, you being nice to me, you all listening to me, I'm so stupid!" I raised my eyes to meet his, feeling a hard wall going up between us. "Gee, thanks a lot. I'm really touched."

"Hiccupâ€"



"Don't think I'm not aware of your motto! Only the strong can belong! I should have seen it, Alvin and I don't even look a thing alike."

"It's notâ€"

"Don't try to sugarcoat it, Stoick, I know what happened." I stood up from the edge of the bed without help this time. "Don't bother."

"What do you think happened?"

"I know what happened." I replied heatedly. "Don't try to lie. You tossed me out to sea to let Thor take care of me, but everyone knows it's bad luck when the runt survives and makes it back home only to be tossed out to sea again, so you decided to look after me this time! Why didn't you just tell me the truth?"

"It wasn't like that!" he snapped.

"The sad thing is, I don't even blame you!" I cried. "Who would ever want me for a son?"

"Will you listen?"

His sudden cry surprised me; I stared at him for a second, waiting for him to say something.

"It wasn't like that," he insisted, kneeling down next to me, pulling me back down. He took my good hand, the one resting in my lap. "I would never, ever have given you up, not ever."

"Just stop." I shook my head, shaking off his hand as well. "I don't judge you, I'm leaving anyway, you don't have to bother getting rid of me. And I don't blame you for trying the first time. At least you only tried once."

"Hiccup, I'm not like that." he whispered, but he sounded angry. "Will you please listen to me?"

I glared at him for a second, long and hard, not even wanting to hear what he had to say. But his gaze pleaded with me to give in and I found it too hard to say no. I couldn't tell him no, not when I wished with all my heart that he would be able to pull a better explanation out of the hat. I nodded.

"Good." he breathed. "Now, the point I'm trying to make is that I would never have let you go. I thought you were a stillborn. The midwife insisted you were and told me I was too grief-stricken to see you. She said it was no sight for a grieving heart. I believed her, I let her take you away. I guess she must have set you out to sea, then, but why I don't know."

I wanted so badly to believe it, but how could I let myself? How could I honestly say that Stoick was telling the truth? If I were in my family, I would have disowned me a long time ago, just the way Alvin did. I was nothing but an Outcast with the scars to prove it. Why should Stoick want me?

I stared down at my bandaged hand. I traced a pinkie finger along the bandage. "Soâ€|so you had nothing to do with it?"

"No."

And when I didn't respondâ€| "Hiccup, please look at me."

I gave him a quick peek.

"Hiccup, please. You have to know that I love you. I loved you on the day you were born, I loved you with all my heart. I've loved you ever since. I thought I'd lost hope that I'd ever find you again, but I didn't." he offered me a sad smile. "I thought I'd given up on you, but the moment you landed here and I saw your face, I knew. You look so, so much like your mother."

"Why didn't you tell me then? When I landed here?"

He hesitated. "I think I would have, but the moment I entered the room, you drew away from me. Like you were scared of me. You looked terrified of me the first time we spoke, Hiccup. And you were covered in scars. One plus one equals two. It doesn't take a genius to figure it out when it's all right in front of you."

"Oh." I muttered. "Alâ€|alright then."

"I wouldn't have given you up." he whispered. "You have to know that, Hiccup. I would have given up the world before I'd let you go. And I would still give it, Hiccup. I would give the world for you to have grown up with me. If giving up the world would make you stay with me long enough for your injuries to heal, then I would."

"Soâ€|so you really doâ€|you really doâ€|" I couldn't ask it. Because even though he'd said it, I couldn't bear it if he laughed at me and told me no.

"I really do what?"

"You really do care about me, then?" I blurted it out without thinking.

His gaze softened. "Of course I do, Hiccup." He rested his hand on my shoulder again, rubbing slowly back and forth in a soothing manner. "And I always will, okay? Forever and always."

## 51. Cousin

Untold

### Chapter 51 - Cousin

Summary: Snotlout is bored and decides to drag Hiccup into a game.

\*\*A/N: Okay, so completely random thing that I like MUCH better than I'm With You... xP anyway, I like it so much better, and I've been meaning to write something like this for awhile, where Hiccup realizes that being Stoick's son makes him Snotlout's cousin, because just yes Snotlout/Hiccup cousinly feels I cannot resist :3 that's

probably why I like Snotlout so much...and why I love Thawfest and Defiant One...and why I wrote I Didn't Mean to Hurt You, Too...anyway, enjoy! \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"I'm bored!" Snotlout groaned.<p>

"Mmm." I mumbled, the afternoon breeze playing with my hair.

"Entertain me," Snotlout commanded.

"Which one us?" I asked, eyes still closed.

"Any of you!"

"Oh! I know!" Tuffnut sat upright. "Let's light Ruffnut on fire!"

"Can't we do something that doesn't risk bodily harm?" Fishlegs asked.

"Chickenlegs," Snotlout snorted.

"Look, guys, why don't you go play a game or something?" I rolled over, turning away from them.

Snotlout crawled over to me. "Okay, but you have to come, too."

"No, I don't."

"I can make you."

"I'm not scared." I tried to stifle a yawn and failed.

"You should be." Snotlout scowled.

"What can you do to me?" I demanded, scooting closer to Toothless. Toothless wrapped his tail protectively around me, giving Snotlout a 'so-there' look.

Snotlout sighed, throwing himself back down onto the grass. "Fine. Whatever."

"Look up at the clouds," I suggested. "Try and find shapes."

"That's an actual game?" Snotlout rose up on one elbow, apparently intrigued. "But it doesn't involve hitting anybody!"

"It's a Hiccup game." Ruffnut supplied.

"Games don't have to involve violence." I responded. "If you guys want some fun, you can race."

"Do we get to cheat?"

"What do you think?"

Snotlout considered for a second. "Well. We are Vikings. Let's do a

relay race."

"Five people is an uneven number." I told him.

"We're doing it with six."

"I'm not playing."

"Then what are you going to do?" Snotlout asked, sitting up and shaking my shoulder.

I rolled over to face him, opening my eyes for the first time. "I'm going to be taking a nap."

"But it's a perfectly good Sunday, and you're going to waste it? On a nap?" he seemed unable to grasp the concept.

I nodded, trying to turn back over.

He pouted, keeping a tight hold on my shoulder. "We can't do a relay race without you!"

"Snotlout, what if I'm the referee?" I asked. "Would that make you happy?"

Snotlout sighed dramatically. "If you won't run with us, we can't play."

"Isn't there anybody else on Berk you could ask to run with you?" I demanded, leaning up on my elbow.

"No." he responded stubbornly.

I glanced down uncertainly at my leg — the reason why I was so tired. I had been up half the night with waves of agony rolling through the stump, making it impossible to sleep. The pain had at last receded, and I had fallen asleep, but it was only an hour or two later that I'd woken up to see the sun rising already.

I wasn't sure how my leg would react to running—I bit my lip nervously, thinking it over. I had never tried to run on it before and wasn't even sure I could.

"Okay." I sighed, sitting up and taking to my feet reluctantly. The stump protested painfully, but I bit it back. "Let's just make this quick. Whose team am I gonna be on?"

"Mine!" Snotlout called.

"That's actually not a good idea," Fishlegs inserted himself into the conversation. "No offense, Hiccup, but you'd be a liability to anybody's team, really. You can't run as fast as the rest of us."

Heat rushed to my cheeks as my eyes fell on my metal leg again. It was already beginning to throb just from standing on it. "I—I get it."

Snotlout had spent so much time trying to convince me to join him that I'd allowed myself to think he actually wanted me to play with

them, and that was, in all honesty, kind of nice. I still remembered the kids on Outcast Island always excluding me from everything; I wasn't used to somebody truly wanting me there.

Fishlegs nodded apologetically.

"Oh. Yeah. I'llâ€¦I'll justâ€¦"

"Don't sit out!" Snotlout groaned. "C'mon, be on my team, Hiccup." He threw Fishlegs a scathing look. "\_I\_ appreciate you, cousin. \_I\_ don't think you're a liability." He put an arm around my shoulders and fell silent for a second. "Except when it comes to axe throwing," he added thoughtfully. "Then you're a complete liability."

I laughed, but my mind had latched onto something completely different. "Cousin?"

"Yeah." he nodded. "You're my dad's brother's son, right? That makes you my cousin." he flashed me a smile.

I couldn't help the smile that spread over my own face. I really liked the sound of 'cousin'.

"Now, c'mon, let's race!" Snotlout punched me, hard, on the shoulder and took off. "You're on my team, too, Tuffnut!"

"You're leaving me with Fishlegs and Ruffnut?" Astrid squawked, already beginning to race after him. "That's not fair!"

"It's so fair!" Snotlout protested, never even slowing down to speak. "I have One Leg, you have Fishlegs!"

"His name isn't One Leg!"

"That's a pretty appropriate nickname, actually," I responded.

"See?" Snotlout gestured to me. "He likes it!" He arrived at the trunk of a tree some feet away, put a hand on it and then streaked off again, coming back towards us at full speed.

Astrid glared at him before pitching herself at the tree too, pressing her hand to its trunk and coming back.

Snotlout smacked Tuffnut's hand and the blonde boy took off. Astrid glared at them before grabbing Ruffnut's hand and all but shoving her beside him. "Go, go, go!"

They were both off, and maybe Ruffnut was a hair's breadth faster than Tuffnut, because she seemed to be arriving at the trunk a pace ahead of him.

"You're up soon, Hiccup!" Snotlout put a hand nervously on my shoulder, grinning at me. "Make me proud."

"I will." I grinned, but on the inside, I was just so, so nervous. My leg needed to hold me up. What would happen if it didn't, if it couldn't?

Tuffnut touched the back of my hand and cried, "One Leg, get a move

on!"

I began to run, the grass and trees blurring as I pitched myself forward, my legs trembling beneath me. The pain in my stump was so strong that I nearly collapsed on the ground, but I gritted my teeth and told myself to be a man. I could take it. It hardly even bothered me. I was inches away from the trunk and Fishlegs was miles behind meâ€|I was doing fineâ€|

And then my prosthetic collapsed beneath me and I hit the grass, practically bawling like a baby from the pain. I clutched at my stump, trying to make it to my feet again but Snotlout and Astrid were by my side in an instant, their concerned faces the only thing I could see. Toothless appeared above me, nuzzling my hair, green eyes wide with worry.

"Are you alright?" Snotlout was shaking my shoulder, his face blurring above me as he shoved Toothless anxiously out of the way.

"Yeahâ€|" I mumbled.

Fishlegs wandered over, his brows drawn down in concern. "Are youâ€|"

"Yes, I'm alright." I gritted my teeth, but Snotlout put a hand on my chest.

"Uhâ€|slow down there, Tiger," he coached gently. "Let's just, uhâ€|get you out of the way."

"I want to finish the race."

"Hiccup, that's not a good idea."

"Let me finish the stupid race!"

"You were having trouble walking today, I can't imagine how hard it would be to run."

I gave a frustrated sigh. "C'mon, just let me finish."

"No." he insisted, tugging me up by my vest. "Lean on me if you have to, okay?"

Toothless shimmied up under my hand, allowing me to lean heavily on him. Between him and Snotlout, I reached the spot I'd been sitting in relatively quickly and Snotlout set me down gently. "Justâ€|be careful, okay, Hiccup? You really scared me out there."

I was ready to give him a sarcastic remark, but the concern in his eyes stopped me. Snotlout was always careful to never let his emotions show on his face, but this time he seemed genuine. "Just don't scare me like that, cousin."

The word made a bit of a smile spread over my face, and suddenly his concern wasn't all that bad. "Whatever you sayâ€|cousin."

Untold

## Chapter 52 - Drunken

Summary: Hiccup tries alcohol for the first time. He does not do well.

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, I just want to say this: a lot of people think drunkenness is really funny and one big joke, and if somebody does something stupid while they're drunk, it's all fun and games, right? WRONG. I have SO MUCH to say on the subject of alcohol, but I'm not going to bore you with all the details here. The main point I hope to make is this: drunkenness isn't funny, and I wasn't trying to make it so. I was trying to make Hiccup's actions in this amusing, not because of the alcohol but because he's normally very serious. I wanted a break from I'm With You, and this was the perfect thing.\*\*

**\*\*P.S:** I know Vikings don't have napkins. I got really lazy somewhere in there, okay? I guess I was thinking cloth napkins. I imagine they'd have those. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>The trouble started with Gobber's first question, and it continued on for the rest of the night. Apparently, the village was having some sort of celebration, I think maybe for the beginning of summer, and, as Gobber picked up a mug for himself and began to fill it, he turned to me with a raised eyebrow. "Have you ever tried mead, lad?"<p>

"No." I responded, barely listening as I pulled out my sketchbook and pencil. I remembered the one time I'd asked to, Alvin had told me I was quite the handful without adding alcohol to the mix.

Toothless' prosthetic tail was sturdy enough, but I was beginning to realize just how easily it could break; it wasn't fireproof and it was metal, meaning it was a lightning magnet. Not to mention the whole reason I'd crashed on Berk in the first place was because somebody had a lucky shot with an arrow and had pierced the weakest part of the tail. So I was trying to think of a way to make his tail completely invincible. I was planning to go over to one of the corner tables and draw new designs for his tail and shun any forms of social interaction, but Gobber wasn't having it.

"Well, c'mon, then!" And he picked up a slightly smaller mug, filled it to the brim with mead, and shoved it into my hand. I set it down on one of the nearby tables and shoved my pencil back in my sketchbook, giving him an exasperated look. "Do you mind?"

"No."

"Alcohol and dragons do not mix." I glowered.

"You're not a dragon," he pointed out, not getting it.

"Yeah, but if I try to fly Toothless when I can barely focus on anything â€" which I know alcohol does to you â€" then that'd be a

very bad idea."

"You're not going flying on him tonight, right?"

"â€|No."

Gobber smirked. "And how would you know about the effects of alcohol, you just said you'd never had it!"

"I've seen the effects on enough people to know," I responded.

"But you need to try it to understand the appeal."

"I'm told mead is nasty."

"You're a deprived child," he told me sadly.

"If it makes you happy, fine, I'll have a swig," I told him. "But I'm not drinking this whole thing." I eyed the mug warily as I picked it up. It was nearly as tall as I was, and it was an effort just to lift it.

I put the cup to my lips and took a quick sip. It was better than I thought it was going to be, a sort of honey taste lingering on my tongue. Gobber watched me with a grin and I scowled at his smirk. "Okay, okay, it's pretty good, I said it!"

I deserted him to go sketch in peace, away from all the festivities.

"Don't forget your drink!" he laughed, clearly still tickled by my reaction as he jokingly set the mug down beside me. I rolled my eyes at his antics. When he left, I would grab some water; I had never had alcohol before and I didn't want to risk it.

I got about ten minutes alone before there was a painful punch to the shoulder and Snotlout stood there, Viking helmet a little lower than usual. His eyes were only a bit glassy, and I could smell only the hint of alcohol on his clothes. "Hiccup!" he laughed, slapping me on the back so hard I thought my spine was going to crumple. "Come play with us, I already beat Tuffnut and Fishlegs!"

"Play what?" I squeaked, trying to figure out if I could still move my back.

"We're having â€|" he paused for a second, evidently doing some very difficult thinking. "Drinking contest!" he slapped the table, pleased with himself for remembering. "We're having a drinking contest!"

"Ohâ€|uhâ€|" I glanced down at the mug of mead Gobber had found so amusing. "No, thanks, really. I'm not into that stuff."

"You've never had mead before?" he gasped, astonished.

"Uhâ€|well, I've had a sip," I told him with a shrug, picking up my pencil again, deeming myself uninjured, although I did think there were going to be a few bruises the next morning.

Snotlout frowned. "Just a sip?"



"Wellâ€¦"

"C'mon, cousin, come do it with me!" He yanked me up by the collar of my vest, grabbed the cup, and physically dragged me along, where the other teens stood in a circle. Astrid seemed a little bit fed up with the party, and Fishlegs looked a bit green, but the twins and Snotlout looked like they were having the time of their lives. The twins were very clearly drunk as well.

"You can't leave yet!" he declared. "We have to have this contest first! Whoever finishes their drink first is the winner!"

"Uhâ€¦" I glanced down uncertainly as he stuffed the mug in my hand.

"Ready!" He called.

I hesitated, caught his eye and nodded.

"Ready!" Snotlout called again.

I blew out a frustrated breath and nodded once. How he managed to see me, because his Viking helmet slipped over his eyes, I'm not sure, but he snapped his fingers.

"That's the signal to start," Tuffnut informed me, and I raised the cup to my lips and began to drink.

The drink at first tasted just as good and I thought, 'well, this really isn't so bad' and then I was about to set it down but I saw Snotlout hadn't yet and Tuffnut was yelling, "CHUG IT!" at the top of his lungs. So, you know, I just sort of kept going. It wasn't very hard, and it was just, 'suck, swallow, go again'. I was surprised by how it was like a regular drink. I guess I'd expected drinking contests to be a little moreâ€¦I don't knowâ€¦fun, I guess. I'd never expected to find myself in the thick of one, though.

I kept drinking for a long second, but I knew I'd lost when Snotlout happily set his empty mug back down, his eyes glassier than ever. His smile stretched wide across his face and he pushed his helmet up out of his eyes. "I am the beast!" He announced, pounding a fist on the table. "I have bested you all!" His voice was strangely slurred, as if the alcohol was already reaching him.

I rolled my eyes, but I couldn't help smiling a little myself. "Yeah, yeah, I know, you're the drinking champ."

"Let's go again!" he yelled. "Get another! I'll play you all again!"

Fishlegs excused himself from the game, and Snotlout let him off because he'd already had one mug, after all, but I'm pretty sure that nothing was getting me off the hook after he found out that this was my first time being in a drinking contest, or even trying mead at all.

So Tuffnut joined in because he liked it and I joined in because Snotlout begged me to.

When I set my empty mug down and faced Tuffnut triumphantly " who was still attempting to guzzle it down before I noticed, by the way " I realized that I was warm. The lights were dimmer than they'd been before, but that just made the whole thing even better, because my head was hurting a little anyway, and I had a feeling bright lights weren't gonna do it any good.

Snotlout clapped me proudly on the back, throwing an arm around my shoulders. "You won!" His voice was loud and slurred in my ear, and I couldn't resist giving him a wide grin in return.

"I won!" I repeated happily, like it was the greatest news in the world. And he grabbed one of my arms and lifted it in the air, shaking it in victory. "He won!" he announced to the room at large, and Tuffnut sat down in his chair and grumbled that I'd cheated.

"C'mon, go again!" Snotlout grabbed another mug for himself and I turned to fill up mine. "C'mon, let's go! You and me, cousin!"

"Let me go!" I glanced down at the mug, my brow knitting. What was I going to do again? "Refill!" I held the mug up for him to see. "I have to refill! It's very important that I refill!" And at the time, it really was.

I managed to stumble my way in the dim lighting over to the mead jugs, and then I was grumbling because the lights were so darn dim, and whose idea was that lighting, anyway? And then I filled up my cup again and was trying to get back over to Snotlout, to show him who was boss, only somebody stepped in front of me at the last minute and I plowed into them, spilling my drink on them. Even in my stupor, I recognized enough to know that I should apologize. "Shorry!" My voice came out thick and heavy, my tongue hard to lift. "Shorry, shorry!"

"Hiccup?" The voice above me sounded mystified as the speaker wiped the mead off his front and pulled me away from him, staring down at me.

"Hi!" I waved at him happily, recognition making me smile. "Hi, Shtock! Shorry about the drink! I think we have "shome" what are they called "napkinsh?"

"Are you " he seemed unable to ask exactly what he wanted, because he just kept staring at me, opening and closing his mouth.

I looked him in the eye for a few seconds solemnly, waiting for him to speak. And then giggles erupted from my mouth.

"Hiccup " his voice trailed off, his concern becoming clear.

"Your beard!" I pointed to the great red mass, unable to quit laughing as I spoke. The laughter did not help the pronounced slur. "Your beard! It's sho "sho big! And it'sh red!"

"Yes, I'm aware that it's "

"Red!" I giggled, but I stumbled and fell to the wooden floor. "Ouch " I mumbled, looking down. "That hurt "a lot "

"Are you alright?"

I tried to nod. "Yeahâ€¦I'm fine. Should be." I tried to rise to my feet, but Stoick took my hand, helping me up.

"Thanksh," I told him with a nod. "Let'sh go over here, there are shome napkinsh and I need toâ€¦refill my drink."

"Umâ€¦" he plucked the mug from my fingers with ease. "I think you've had quite enough mead for today."

"I'm competing!" I protested, reaching for the cup. "I'm gonna besht Shnotlout!"

"Hiccupâ€¦"

"C'mon! He told me I had to be in thish drinking contesht!"

"Hiccup." His voice was gentle but firm as he very gently pried my fingers off the cup again. I felt like I was giving it all my strength, but he pulled it out of my grip easily. "I'm taking you home."

"I'm refilling my drink." I told him matter-of-factly. "It's \_very important\_ that I refill my drink." I handed him a few napkins. "Here."

"You need to get home."

"I need to beat Shnotlout!"

"No, you don't." He set the mug down on the counter, yanked the napkins out of my grip, and, in one swift motion, picked me up. The floor disappeared beneath me and I yelped, clinging to his shirt as the world began to blur around me.

"C'mon," he said. "I'm taking you home."

"I want to goâ€¦" I struggled to remember my goal. "I want to beat Shnotlout!"

And that's pretty much the last thing I remember from that night.

### 53. That's My Boy

Untold

#### Chapter 53 - That's My Boy

Summary: Despite being a runt, Hiccup still has Viking traits that any father would be proud of.

**\*\*A/N:** Now, I know it's probably OOC for canon Hiccup to ever fly off the handle and hit anyone, expect maybe someone who really deserved it, but, in my opinion, I think this AU Hiccup is different from canon in several important ways, and one of those ways is that he's

been taught in a lot firmer of a way to strike back whenever somebody taunts him and that that would be his automatic reaction. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I blew out a breath, my hands clenched into fists at my sides as I waited for Stoick to speak. He paced in front of me for several long seconds, stopping to allow his eyes to rove over me again. I shifted when his gaze lingered for a long second on my swelling black eye.<p>

"Let me get this straight," he finally said, after a long and uncomfortable silence. He hesitated for a few seconds longer. "Alright, please set me straight."

"The guy provoked me." I mumbled defensively, unsure whether to look pleased with myself or hang my head in shame. I opted for having a very flexible, smooth expression that could change in an instant to one or the other, depending on what Stoick said to me within the next few minutes. "He started saying things about me and he wouldn't quit. So I decked him, okay?"

"You punched him?" Stoick asked incredulously.

"He wouldn't shut up, okay?" My voice rose slightly in my heated defense of my actions.

If I had so much as blinked in that moment, I would've missed the way Stoick's beard twitched. "What does he look like, then?"

"His nose is bleeding. I may have busted his lip." I couldn't stop the proud grin that spread over my face then.

Stoick's beard moved again as he beamed proudly. He ruffled my hair and said simply, "That's my boy!"

## 54. I'm With You Part XVIX

Untold

Chapter 54 - I'm With You Part XVIX

Summary: Continuation of I'm With You

\*\*A/N: Wow, I actually like this chapter! And is that how you write nineteen in Roman numerals? Meh. I'll correct it if I find out I did it wrong. Anyway, I'm so happy I got this written! \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I stared down at the bed for a second, all the things he'd just said swirling around in my mind. I wasn't sure what to make of any of it. For the first ten years of my life, I'd defined myself solely by my tribe; I was an Outcast, and I was proud of this. I may not have had the stomach for those public whippings, but I was tough and strong and fearless and I was certain that one day I would be able to handle it, just like everyone else.<p>

And then, ever since Alvin had locked me up, ever since he'd turned

so suddenly, harsh and cold and mean, ever since the things he did to me became unforgivable, I had quietly and methodically washed myself clean. I had thrown away all traces of Outcast from my personality, and told myself I would one day be free of the whole tribe, and I would never have to look back.

And then to find out that I didn't even share blood with the very person who had defined, and then devalued, meâ€¦

My head was spinning as I thought of it.

And what to make of Stoick? I wondered. I could deal with people who wanted to hurt me, but people who cared about me was one thing I couldn't handle. And I'd let him get too close, I'd let him too far in. I never should have let my guard slip like that. And if it had, I should have started avoiding him then and there.

I ran a hand over my face, a frustrated sigh escaping my lips as the things around me began to make sense. And then I dropped my hand, suddenly realizing something that had confused me before. "That's why Alvin was so curious." I sighed grimly, running my fingers through my hair. It felt odd that the auburn strands had been washed clean, that they weren't matted together with dried blood.

"Curious about what?" Stoick leaned forward in his chair, gently taking his hand off my shoulder as I moved around.

"He kept asking me questions about Berk and stuff," I replied. "He must have wanted to know if I had discovered the truth or not." My eyes widened. "You know what, when I think about it, that makes sense. No wonder he was so mad and he did that gê€"

I cut myself off, remembering the 'no more pieces of me' rule.

"He did what?" Stoick demanded.

"Umâ€¦" I glanced down at the bed. \_No more pieces of you. You know you can't trust him. \_But it was so hard to keep reminding myself of that when all I wanted to do was throw myself in his arms and cry my heart out. The tears stung at the backs of my lids, but I closed my eyes, trying to prevent them from falling. I couldn't cry, not here, not now. Vikings didn't cry. "It's nothing, it was justâ€¦you knowâ€¦" My voice shook a little, threatening to break. "I mean, obviously, he wanted information from me about Berk, he couldn't get that by being all polite and throwing a tea party, could he?" I sounded unlike myself; scared and small and frantic, speaking much faster than I usually did.

"Hiccupâ€¦" Stoick's hand found my shoulder again, pulling me a bit closer, like he was about to hit me. I tensed, waiting for the pain.

He pulled me into a hug and I was so surprised that my eyes flew open and then I had to squeeze my eyes shut and focus on breathing, because he was doing this on purpose. If he wasn't careful, he was going to make me cry. His gentle hands, rubbing circular patterns in my back, made it even harder for me to hold them back.

"I'm so sorry he hurt you."

A tear burned my eyes on its way down and I squeezed my eyes shut again. Vikings didn't cry, period, and I was not going to break down in front of Stoick. "I'm okay. You know I am." My voice was thick with the tears I was trying so hard to hold back.

"No, I don't," he responded quietly, pulling away from me and tracing a hand along my cheek. He cupped my cheek with the same hand, and I thought he was about to burst into tears then, too. "I don't know anything about you. I'm sitting next to my son and I don't know anything about him." I could tell this was honestly a troubling thought for him; the pain in his voice was so sincere.

"Oh." I tried to think of a good response. "Well, you're not missing much, sir."

A sad smile tugged at the corners of his lips. "That's like telling somebody who has been chasing a priceless treasure, only with it to slip through his fingers, 'oh, don't worry, you're not missing much'."

"If I'm supposed to be the treasure in that analogyâ€"

"You are," he responded quietly, pulling me into another hug, tighter than the last. "You're my greatest treasure, Hiccup. Even if you leave me soon, even if I miss you, which I know I will, even if I cry and grieve and beg for you to stay, then I'm still going to think it was the best days of my life, knowing you. No matter how painful it is to think of you later."

"I'm not a priceless treasure," I pulled away from him suddenly, looking away from him to wipe at my eyes. He did the awkward stare-off-into-the-distance-pretend-he's-not-crying thing that I'm sure everybody is familiar with. "If I was, I think I'd know it."

"That's the problem," he took my chin gently in one hand, forcing me to look up at him. "You can't see yourself through my eyes. I look at you and I see somebody beautiful, I see somebody precious. You look at yourself and you see none of that. And I wish you could understand that you're so perfect, you're so wonderful. Hiccup, you're absolutely extraordinary, and I can't understand why you can't see it."

I blushed and I dropped my eyes to the floor, suddenly feeling as if the room was too hot. "I'm not," I stammered. "I'mâ€¦I'm really not any of that, sir, I don'tâ€¦I don't really get how you can think that. I mean, why did you bother in the first place? Why were you so nice to me when I landed here? And whyâ€¦why did you save me from Alvin? I mean, I'm nothing, sir, I really don't matter."

For a second, Stoick simply stared at me, as if he was trying to figure me out. "Weren't you hearing me? Weren't you listening? I explained it for you, Hiccup, I just explained it."

"I'm not precious!" I took suddenly to my feet â€" even when he was kneeling and I was standing, he was still taller than I was. "I'm not some treasure, I'm not priceless or wonderful, or extraordinary! I'm ordinary as dirt!"

"No, you're not!" Stoick sounded angry now, too. "You're perfect,

Hiccup, perfect. And I came to save you because I love you and because I can't live without you, and because I think of you every day, and I worry and fret over you, and I don't ever want you to desire anything that I can't give you."

I wanted to keep being angry, to keep yelling at him, but I couldn't. I couldn't be angry when tears were blurring my vision and I could hardly see. I couldn't be angry when I was stumbling and hitting my knees. I couldn't be angry with him when he held me so tightly. "I don't get it," I sobbed. "I don't get why you love me. I don't matter. I'm not worth it." But I held onto him and I cried, because it felt good and because it felt nice that he loved me, even if he shouldn't.

I was too much trouble and I wasn't good enough, and I didn't matter and I wasn't any of those amazing things he said I was, but it felt good to be told I was. So I let him rock me back and forth, although I should've fought him on it. And I let him gather me in his arms and whisper over and over that he loved me and that he would never stop, because it felt so nice.

### 55. Thunderstorm Part III

Untold

#### Chapter 55 - Thunderstorm Part III

Summary: Continuation of 'Thunderstorm'. Based on the episode 'When Lightning Strikes'.

\*\*A/N: So, I was kinda thinking of doing the 'When Lightning Strikes' episode from this AU, based off chapters 21 and 22. I really enjoyed writing those, and enjoyed writing this way too much XD I hope you all like C: \*\*

\*\*Also, this is not just ANY old chapter. This, along with many more to come, is the celebration of... \*\*

\*\*700 REVIEWS ON TO BE LOVED THE WAY YOU LOVE ME! OH YEAH! \*\*

\*\*AND 80,000 WORDS ON THIS! OH, YEAH, WOO-HOO! \*\*

\*\*I got a few surprises for you guys, and this one was definitely one of them. I hope you enjoy them all. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>When I woke up, I was curled up against something reassuringly warm and solid and a warm, large hand was stroking my hair. I allowed my eyes to flutter open for half a second before letting them close again, but not before I registered that it was Stoick's chest I was leaning against.<p>

That was his hand in my hair, his strong and steady heartbeat that calmed me, even through the rain and the thunder.

I probably should have said something to break the silence, but I sensed us getting nearer to what happened last night. Stoick might have a lot of questions for me about that and I really, really didn't

want to answer any questions like that, so I just buried my face in his shirt and squeezed my eyes tighter closed.

His warm hand never ceased its constant smoothing of my hair, like he thought I needed to be soothed for whatever reason. It felt nice either way and I didn't protest.

The opening of the front door brought me back to reality, and Stoick and I both exchanged glances, waiting for Gobber to waltz in. Thor knew he still hadn't mastered the art of knocking.

I wondered what kind of news he had to bring that was so urgent that he came early instead of waiting for me to show up the forge. Normally he let me relay news to Stoick.

But instead, it was Toothless who bounded into the room, soaking wet, tongue lolling out as he offered me a gummy grin.

"Hey, bud," I whispered with a smile as he pushed his wet nose into my hand. I scratched him between the ears for a brief second before he backed off and began to shake himself like a dog.

"Toothless, stop!" I cried, but he didn't listen, he continued to shake himself off. "Toothlessâ€" I glanced nervously up at Stoick to see how he was taking this. He was attempting to shield both of us from the water droplets, and, when it was over, he released me and wiped a few drops out of his beard. He sat up in the bed and began to get up, sending the dragon an annoyed look. "Does he do that all the time?"

"Whenever he gets wet," I responded, swinging my legs over the side of the bed. There was no point in trying to sleep anymore; Toothless had woken us up too thoroughly.

As the three of us began to troop into the kitchen, though, Stoick didn't seem mad. He just put an arm around me, pulled me close and whispered, "Are you alright?"

I nodded into his shoulder.

"Then so am I," he whispered with a small smile. "If you're alright, Hiccup, I am, too."

I couldn't fight the warm feeling in my chest when he said those words, and I didn't want to. He sat down at the kitchen table, looking out the window with a little sigh. Toothless bounded up beside my usual chair, sitting and waiting impatiently for me to catch up. As I began to seat myself, a loud clap of thunder sounded outside. I jumped slightly in my seat and Stoick frowned, standing up and going over to the window.

"That's funny," he commented with a slight frown. "The storm should be overâ€"|"

"Why hasn't it worn itself out by now?" I whispered hoarsely, feeling a bit of panic begin to cling to me. All I could think about was last night. I really didn't want to cause another scene like that.

"Calm down," he responded quickly, but he didn't look away from the window. "I'm sure it will soon. It justâ€"|"normally wears itself out



by daybreak. I'm sure some of the villagers will want to know about Thor." he sighed. "As if I have the god's address or something."

My brow knitted. "What about Thor? I mean, I know he's the god of thunder, butâ€¦"

"According to legend, whenever a storm continues on after the rising of the sun," Stoick began, "it usually means Thor's angry at our people. The last time we had a storm like this that continued on was when Barnstadt was here."

"Barn-who?" I repeated, temporarily distracted from the storm long enough to pay attention to him.

"Jorgen Barnstadt," he explained. "Drifter. He crashed on our island and supposedly needed help in repairing his boat, but he was stealing from widows and old men. Thor gave him a lightning bolt to the head just before he could make his escape. Once we sent him off the island, the god's never given us any trouble since, and neither has Barnstadt." He cut a slightly worried look at the window. "I understand why Thor was angry that time, but \_this\_ timeâ€¦"

He stood and opened the front door, peering out at the gray sky. "It looks pretty bad," he commented thoughtfully.

Another boom of thunder seemed to shake the hut and I shuddered a little as Stoick put a comforting hand on my back.

"You're alright," he said gently, rubbing in a circular pattern. His touch soothed me only slightly. "I'm sure the storm will wear itself out soon. You'll be fine."

Toothless gave a moan of worry, rubbing his head along my palm. I gave both him and Stoick a grateful smile, scratching my dragon behind the ears. "I'm okay, bud, I'll be okay."

"Uh-oh." Stoick remarked, peering out.

"What's wrong?" I looked away from Toothless, who was beginning to purr, following Stoick's gaze.

A positive stream of people was making its way to our house, a sea of Vikings all crowding together, trying to reach the chief's doorstep first.

"Stoick!" I noticed Helga was in front, her normally neat hair unkempt, falling out of its careful ponytail. "What's going on? Why is Thor angry at us?"

Stoick opened his mouth to respond, but before he could, others were beginning to voice the same question, all offering horrible scenarios.

"I don't presume to know Thor's mind," Stoick finally raised a hand for silence, and everybody stopped speaking instantly. I don't know if it was because he was the chief, or if something about him just commanded respect. "But I'm sureâ€¦"

"I KNOW WHY HE'S SO ANGRY!" bellowed an old, cracked voice from the back of the crowd.

Stoick's eyes narrowed as the sound of clinking dragon teeth reached our ears. "\_Mildew\_", he hissed under his breath.

"I KNOW WHAT HE WANTS!" Mildew continued, pushing and shoving his way to the front. "HE WANTS THIS BOY SENT OFF THE ISLAND!" He raised his staff, the teeth still clinking, and pointed it directly at me. Another clap of thunder made me jump slightly, and then there was a loaded pause.

"What drivell is this?" Stoick finally managed to sputter. "What, are you telling me Thor sent this storm because of Hiccup?"

"He's an Outcast to the core!" Mildew shouted. "Thor is furious at us for housing him! He's a demon!"

I noticed Gobber glaring at Mildew, opening his mouth to yell him down, but Stoick beat him to the punch. He didn't yell, or go red in the face â€" instead, he pressed his lips together, so tightly they turned white, and said in a dangerous, low voice, "What did you just call my son?" He spaced each word out, as if allowing Mildew to hear one at a time.

Any other Viking would have backed down in the face of Stoick's anger, but not Mildew. He leaned forward, a sneer playing at his lips. "You heard me, Stoick. Your 'son' is not fit to be on Berk." He used finger quotes on the word 'son'.

"That is not your decision." Stoick snapped, leaning over, making as if to shut the door.

Mildew stuck his staff in the way, leaning forward, speaking in what would have been a low voice, except I was sure everyone could hear it. "You know I'm right, Stoick. We won't stand for this anymore."

"Get out." The words were sharp, but crystal clear. "Get out of my house, Mildew."

"They know the truth." Mildew's pale eyes glittered with triumphant malice as he gestured to the villagers with his staff. "You can't protect him forever, Stoick. He's an Outcast to the core, and they know the truth."

## 56. Thunderstorm Part IV

Untold

### Chapter 56 - Thunderstorm Part IV

Summary: Continuation of 'Thunderstorm'.

\*\*A/N: Okay, next chapter is up! You guys make my day by leaving reviews, thank you all so much! Actually, you also make my day by leaving PMs as well. They're really great and I love talking with you guys :) (Even though I often don't reply for days on end, because yeah...I'm lazy...) ANYWAY, next chapter is a surprise for all of you, but mostly for a certain reader ;-)) I hope you all enjoy C: Next chapter will be up soon. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I couldn't look at Stoick as he slammed the door, rattling the walls of the little house. I stared determinedly at a few cracks in the wooden floorboards, watching stones and dust bunnies scuttle along the floor from the sudden wind.<p>

"The only thing he's interested in is causing trouble," Stoick said aloud, as if that would make it true. "He doesn't mean anything by it."

I nodded slowly, pretending that scratching Toothless' head was an activity that required all my concentration right then.

"The storm will abate soon." He told me. "It shouldn't be longer than a few minutes."

I nodded again. \_"He's an Outcast to the core!" \_My hand curled into a tight fist, and I guess I scratched Toothless a little harder than I meant to, because he gave me a look of utter betrayal and nudged me away with his head.

"Sorry, bud," I murmured to him absently, Mildew's words still echoing in my head. I had tried so hard to not be an Outcast, to make myself different from that tribe. No matter how different I tried to be, it never left me alone.

"He's really not trying toâ€"

"I have to go to the forge." I interrupted Stoick before he could start in again about Mildew really not meaning what he said, that he just didn't know me, didn't understand me. What was different about me that, instead of knowing me, people felt more like they had to "understand" me?

I turned and began to walk away, heading for the back door.

"I'm sorry," Stoick said quietly. The helplessness in his voice hurt.

I shrugged, but I still couldn't look at him. I put all my efforts into pushing open the door, pretending it was so heavy that I had to shoulder it open. "Doesn't matter."

"He just doesn't get it, butâ€"

The door swung open, I jumped down onto the damp grass, into the rain, and slammed the door shut behind him, effectively cutting him off before he could say another word. Alvin had always hated it when I'd done that, stopped a conversation right in the middle, but I didn't care.

I could still see Mildew leaning towards Stoick, mouthing the words, \_"He's a demon." \_

Toothless gently nudged my hand, and for a moment, my features relaxed into a reluctant smile. "I'm okay, bud. I promise." I scratched him under the chin, taking care to be gentler this time.

"\_Your 'son' is not fit to be on Berk." \_

My smile disappeared.

\* \* \*

><p>Gobber didn't look at me when I came into the forge. I could feel my heart take a nosedive when he pointedly avoided my gaze as I reached for a hammer at the same time he did.<p>

"Umâ€|youâ€|go on and take it." I mumbled, dropping my hand.

"No, you can." Gobber nudged the tool at me.

"No, it's fine, I'll use the smaller one." To underline my point, I grabbed the smaller hammer off the shelf and began to pound away at the new sword I was forging. Mildew's words began swirling around in my mind again.

It wasn't just him â€" none of the other villagers had exactly spoken out against him, had they? But then, why would they? I didn't belong on Berk, and even they seemed to realize it. A blush of shame stole over my face and neck. Had Gobber been in that crowd, too? Did he know just how much I didn't belong here?

"Listen, kiddoâ€|" Gobber hesitated, staring down at the spear he was trying to repair. "I, uhâ€|I couldn't help hearing about all the excitement at your house this morningâ€|"

My stomach clenched, but I tried to keep my voice even.

"Yeah?"

"Look, lad," Gobber set down the spear and turned to face me, "you can't listen to a word Mildew says, I told you that after he began saying things about you the first time andâ€"

"He hasn't ever \_quit\_ saying things about me." I let the hammer fall from my grip, not caring that I wasn't making any headway with the stupid sword. "He hasn't stopped and he's never going toâ€"

"Hiccup, ladâ€|." Gobber sighed, one hand going to his helmet like he needed to think before responding. "This is Mildew. He hates \_everyone\_. When I first became the blacksmith, he kept going on about how I would be the ruin of us all, I wasn't sane enough to be here, I didn't belong hereâ€|all that stuff."

It was hard to imagine Berk without Gobber.

"But you know what, he stopped. Because after awhile, I stopped letting it bother me. People are gonna think what they want to think about you. Some people on Berk have already made up their minds about you, Hiccup, and you can't change 'em. But the people who \_matter\_ â€" they aren't telling you that you don't belong here, are they?"

"I guess not," I mumbled.

"Nobody else thinks of you the way Mildew does. You know what Helga told me today when she came to pick up her new axe? She said it was

some of the best workmanship she'd ever seen."

I remembered making that axe, and I remember it definitely wasn't my best work. "You're just saying that."

"I am not."

"Yes, you are."

"No, I'm not."

"It's convenient that Helga isn't around for you to ask."

"Do you want me to go get her?"

"No!"

"Because I can get her."

"No, I don't want you to get her."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes."

"I think I should go get her."

"No, Gobber, really!"

"Alright, alright." Gobber held his hands up in surrender. "Then I won't do that. But I'm being honest, Hiccup, you do belong here, and the people that matter aren't trying to convince you otherwise."

I nodded.

"And technically, Mildew's wrong, because you were a born Hooligan, not an Outcast."

"Yeah, I know."

"He's just an old man with nothing more to do in his spare time than tear other people down."

"I know."

"You'll see."

"I do see."

"No, you don't."

"Yes, I do."

"You will soon."

"Whatever."

Untold

## Chapter 57 - Thunderstorm Part V

Summary: Continuation of 'Thunderstorm'.

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, I lied. This is not the special surprise, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. The special surprise was so stupid that I would have offended the special reader, not pleased them. So, I decided to just do another thing of the Thunderstorm arc. I really can't wait for the next part of it, because I know what's gonna happen :D but I needed to add some filler. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>As Gobber slowly let the conversation drop, I was surprised to find that I was actually feeling a bit better about things. And I had been through much worse than having a few choice words thrown at me, after all. I returned to my work and shut up about Helga for fear Gobber actually would go get her, and tried to stay focused on what I was doing. The work wasn't the type to keep my mind occupied as well as my hands, considering that I knew what to do by now, but it helped a little.<p>

But when I walked out the back door at the end of the day is when things started going wrong again. The storm had been starting to drop as the day went on, but the moment my left foot found the grass, thunder rumbled overhead, and a streak of lightning flashed, one fork in the sky, the other heading for the ground. I jumped, a cry tumbling from my lips.

"It's okay, lad." Gobber's attempts at calming me down were not going to work, but I didn't tell him so; I was too busy paying attention to the lightning. "It's just a little storm."

"Aren't you ashamed?" yelled a voice from somewhere to my right. Looking around, I was rewarded with the sight of Mildew and a few other villagers glaring in my direction.

"Our island was perfectly peaceful before \_you \_were on it!" Mrs. Thorston cried, crossing her arms.

Mildew pointed his staff at me. "Did you all see that? How the lightning started the moment he and the Night Fury were outside?"

Gobber's eyes narrowed. "Ignore them." He shoved me slightly forward and I stumbled a little, tripping and landing in the grass.

As I started to rise back up, the thunder grew louder and louder. Another flash of forked lightning appeared, and I couldn't help but shudder slightly.

"Thor's going to give you your punishment, boy!" Mildew bellowed. "Don't any of you remember the story of Barnstadt?"

Gobber took a step forward. "Mildewâ€"

"If you're going to get what you deserve, why do you insist on dragging us down with it?" Mildew called, smoothly interrupting

Gobber as if the man hadn't even spoken. "Any decent person would get away to let Thor deal with them, and them alone! That's what I'd do if I were you, boy!"

Toothless growled.

"Mildew, put a cork in it!" Gobber yelled. I heard him to start to go off on a tangent, and I watched Toothless roaring and growling at the large knot of Vikings, but I wasn't really paying attention. I again told myself that I had heard much worse in my time, so much worse. I mean, the last island I lived on hadn't wanted me either, right? I could deal with the people of Berk despising me.

But what if what they said was true, and Thor really was mad at me for some reason? It would make sense, seeing as the gods haven't exactly done me a whole bunch of favors over the years but why now? What did I do now to anger him? And why did it have to be now that he chose to punish me, now when things were finally starting to look up? Why couldn't he have just given me a lightning bolt to the head when I was stuck on Outcast Island?

I managed to stumble to my feet, but standing up only seemed to increase the storm; the thunder rumbled still louder, and another fork of lightning lit up the dusky purple sky. I shuddered slightly and I walked over to Toothless, running a hand lightly across his head. He looked up at me and I sighed a little, jerking my head in the direction of Stoick's house. "C'mon, bud, it's not worth it."

Despite my words, he looked ready to keep arguing, but I guess something in my expression must have convinced him not to. He walked me all the way to Stoick's house and by the time we reached the porch he was literally walking me there. Seems that my amputated leg and bad weather didn't agree very well, because this was some of the worst pain that the stump had ever given me.

But when I walked in, Stoick wasn't home, which was a relief; right now, that was just one less thing I had to face. With Toothless' help, I limped my painful way upstairs and sat down on the edge of the bed, undoing the straps of my prosthetic. "Maybe he's right," I murmured to my dragon.

Toothless had his head on the edge of the bed, staring up at me in concern.

>"I mean, maybe Thor *is* mad at me." My voice was becoming smaller and smaller with every word I spoke. "And he's punishing the people of Berk, because I'm on the island, too."

Toothless perked up his ears, listening closely.

"Maybe I really should just leaveâ€¦" I pulled my good knee up to my chest, resting my chin on my leg.

Toothless gave a soft, gentle growl, but there was enough firmness in it to let me know that the pity party was over.

"If I left Berk, things would calm down," I said hesitantly. "I mean, do you thinkâ€¦"

Toothless interrupted me with another growl before I could finish my

sentence.

"Okay, well do you have any bright ideas?" I demanded. "I mean, I'll try to think of more, but if I can't, and if this storm doesn't stop soon, I'm leaving. Thor can't punish a whole village because of my stupidity."

Toothless growled a little when I said "my stupidity" but he gently pushed me up onto the bed with his nose and I landed with a thump on my pillow. "Oof. Thanks, bud." Most of the time, I slept on the floor, using his back for a pillow, but on rare nights, we decided not to do that. I guess he just didn't want to tonight.

He used his nose to tug the blanket up over my body, and nuzzled my hair affectionately. This small gesture made me smile a little as he gave me his usual 'now you go to sleep' looks. It was that look he used that made him seem more like my mom than my best friend, because whenever I'd had a hard day, he always tried to help in any way he could, tucking me in bed, nuzzling my hair with his nose, licking my cheek, whatever it took to get me to smile.

I allowed my eyes to close, but I didn't actually fall asleep for a long, long time.

## 58. Viking Courage

Untold

### Chapter 58 - Viking Courage

Summary: Hiccup has an...interesting phobia. Or at least that's what he calls it. Gobber thinks it's downright hilarious.

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, I've actually had this idea for a good long while. I mean, Hiccup trained a dragon, and yet he could still be afraid of something like this. I'm not trying to mock people who do have a fear/phobia like this, because honestly, I don't like them either. I'm pretty afraid of them, too. So. But still, I had to write a humorous one shot on Gobber realizing that Hiccup is afraid of something like that, even though he trained Toothless.\*\*

**\*\*I think I originally forgot about this idea I had, and then I read another story where Hiccup had the same fear and I was like oh yes xD I remembered it and decided to write it, but I also tried to make it different. How'd I do? \*\***

\* \* \*

><p>After it happened, I would think about how ironic it was that Gobber had just told me I was brave. We had been chatting absently all day, between orders in the forge and Gobber had just watched me set a full basket of fish down in front of Toothless. I petted and stroked my dragon, scratching him gently. An odd expression crossed Gobber's face.<p>

"Hiccup," he said softly, "has anybody ever told you that you're brave?"

I paused to contemplate, feeling a blush creep up into my face and



neck. To give myself something to do, I plucked a fish from the basket and offered it to Toothless. He ate it out of my hand, rubbing his head against my fingers. "No," I mumbled, lightly scratching him on the head. "I'm not brave."

"It'd take a pretty brave Viking to train Toothless."

Despite the fact that he was probably just saying that, just buttering me up so he could get me to work late — or, as he called it, giving me the honey and the hatchet — I couldn't stop the burst of pride in my chest. My blush deepened as I thought of his words. "Oh, c'mon," I argued, "no, I'mâ€"

And then I saw it: as big as my hand, at least, eight hairy legs stretched out, ready to scuttle across to my hand. And I screamed. I abandoned my project, scampered backward about forty feet until I hit the wall opposite, and clutched at Gobber's shirt weakly. The spider didn't move an inch.

"Hiccup?" Gobber turned to look at me curiously. "What's wrong?"

"Kill it!" I moaned, pointing, my voice squeaking. "Gobber, \_kill it\_!"

"Kill what?"

The spider twitched suddenly and a squeak made its way out of my mouth. "It's right there in front of you! Oh, Thorâ€|"

Gobber turned, saw the spider and chuckled. He actually \_chuckled\_, even as it scuttled nearer to us. "That tiny thing? Leave it, Hiccup, it's not doin' any harm."

"\_Gobber\_!" I moaned urgently.

"Alright, alright!" Gobber laughed a little as he took off his boot, slammed it down on the worktable, pried it up and put it right back on.

"Are you sure it's dead?" I asked.

"Yep." Gobber replied without looking up. "Go back to work, Hiccup."

I approached the worktable hesitantly, but he spoke the truth: there was no sign of the spider anywhere on the table. I picked up my tools and quietly went back to work, but after a couple seconds, a low chuckle was heard. Glancing around, I realized Gobber was starting to laugh.

"What's so funny?" I asked, as his laugh began to grow so loud and hearty that he appeared to actually have tears streaming down his cheeks.

"You're afraid!" he gasped. "You're afraid of spiders!"

My face flushed. "What's your point?"

"You trained a \_dragon\_," he emphasized in between giggles, "and

you're afraid of a spider!"

"Shut up!"

## 59. Thunderstorm Part VI

Untold

### Chapter 59 - Thunderstorm Part VI

Summary: Continuation of 'Thunderstorm'.

\*\*A/N: Hey guys. :D I got this written. Still haven't seen HTTYD 2, so please no spoilers, thank you. I'm so tired. But the chocolate cake my mom made is really good. I might go to sleep soon. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I woke with a start in the darkened upstairs bedroom of Stoick's house, and for a second, everything seemed off-kilter. Nothing had visibly woken me, but something feltâ€|wrong. I couldn't help but feel like something was missing. The moment I thought this, the missing thing came walking in the door and nudged my stomach with his nose.<p>

"Where did you go?" I murmured, sitting up and scratching Toothless behind the ears. "And what time is it?"

He gently bit my sleeve between his teeth, tugging me by the fabric.

"Toothless, what do you â€" \_oof!\_ â€" want?"

Toothless jerked his head pointedly at the door.

"Okay, hold onâ€|" I fixed my prosthetic on and stumbled down the steps, trying to catch up to Toothless, who only stopped charging like a maniac when we reached Stoick's bedroom. I was pretty sure he was a heavy sleeper, but I knew he slept with an axe under his pillow for good reason, and I was keen not to be on the wrong end of said axe.

Once we tiptoed past the bedroom, me trying not to let my prosthetic clunk the whole time and emerged into the open air, Toothless sprinted off behind the house. A distant rumble of thunder sounded and I glanced worriedly up at the black, cloudy sky as I followed my dragon. Toothless stopped right in the middle of the backyard, plopped down on his haunches and used his front legs to paw at the dirt.

"Toothless, stop!" I chastised him in a whisper. "Stoick won't like it that you're tearing apart hisâ€"

Toothless gave me a \_let me do my thing \_look and I backed off.

"Okay, okay. Sheesh. Sorry."

Toothless returned to his digging with vigor and, once he had made a pretty shallow hole in the ground, he stood back and looked up at me questioningly.

I knelt down in the rain-soaked grass, peering into the hole. There was something with a dull shine in the hole and, as I tugged it out, I saw it was a metal plate. Nothing fancy, just a simple silver disk.

"Weird," I said aloud. "Why did Stoick bury metal in his yard? A treasure hunt he forgot about?"

Then again, I couldn't really imagine Stoick doing a treasure hunt for anybody. "I don't know, Toothless, I can ask about this tomorrow, you know I canâ€"

But he gave me a fierce look, like I had just suggested I was going to go wave the metal disk over my head on the cliffs. And then he scampered off, checking behind himself once to see if I was following.

"I'm coming," I called, starting a light jog to keep up with him. "Toothless, don't you think this could wait until tomorrow? It's really late, someone's bound to notice us walking around like this, and I really don't get why you're so worked up over a metal plate."

He stopped suddenly again, put his paws on the moist ground and began to tear at the dirt once more. Just as before, he created a shallow hole, stood back to let me look inside, watched me take out the metal plate and examine it. "Okay, so there are two metal plates here." My tired mind was trying to churn out reasons why these were so important to Toothless, but seeing as he couldn't just say it and I couldn't think of the importance, we were stuck. "Toothless, it's really late, pleaseâ€"

But he scampered off again. I stuck it back in the ground, watched as he came up to his next point and dug a little more. This continued on until he seemed satisfied, but he kept staring at me as I clutched that last metal plate, waiting for me to find the answer. The steady downpour of rain from above had long since woken me up, but I still couldn't quite figure it out. "If there's metal in the groundâ€|hmmmmâ€|" I lapsed into a long moment of thought, staring at the disk. I had a feeling that Toothless really needed for me to figure out the answer. "X marks the spot?"

His hopeful look disappeared and he shook his head.

I sighed, plopping down on the wet grass. "I really don't get what you're trying to say to me, bud."

"Hiccup?" A baffled voice from behind me sounded and I glanced around to see Astrid standing there, her hair, for once, free of its braid, down around in her shoulders in golden waves. The rain was steadily soaking her hair through, and, glancing around, I realized I was standing in front of her house. We had made it all the way around the island in the space of an hour or so, what with Toothless' crazy digging.

"Hi, Astrid," I scratched the back of my neck uncomfortably as I waited for the inevitable questions, refusing to engage her even moments before she asked.

"Whatâ€¦are you \_doing\_ out here? You do know it's the middle of the night?" She asked, tucking a particularly persistent curl behind her ear, crossing her arms over her chest.

"Yep, yep, I do." I tugged self-consciously at the edge of my soaked sleeve. "Umâ€¦I really didn't have any plans to come up to your house like this, I swearâ€¦" Even in the chill of the rain, I could feel my cheeks beginning to heat.

Astrid spotted the hole in the ground. "Whatâ€¦" and then the metal disk. "Where did \_that\_ come from?"

I realized how bad this looked, and tried to correct it. "Iâ€¦I really have no ideaâ€¦" I dropped the metal plate back in the hole, kicked the dirt back over it, and patted it into place, like that would make her forget. "Toothless has just been acting kind of strange tonightâ€¦what are you doing out here, anyway?"

"You show up at my house in the middle of the night, digging a hole in my yard, and your excuse is that your dragon is acting kind of strange?" Astrid raised an eyebrow, clearly not buying it for a second.

"Hey!" I raised my hands up to defend myself. "You're not the only one, okay? He's been digging up many yards tonight."

Astrid looked at him. He gave her a pleading look. "Has he?"

"Yes!" I insisted. "It's him, not me! Why do you think I'd dig up your yard? Buried treasure?"

"Hey, there was supposed to be some treasure on this island," she offered half-heartedly, before her smile disappeared. "You should get home, Hiccup. If you've been out here for an hour, you must be freezing."

I shrugged. "I'm alright. If he'll ever stop leading me all over the island." I glared pointedly down at Toothless, who gave me an innocent, 'who-me?' expression.

I rolled my eyes.

Astrid glanced back at her house. "I'd better get back insideâ€¦I just couldn't sleep because of the storm and looked to the window and saw you standing thereâ€¦but my mother might notice I'm gone."

"Yeah, you'd better go." For some reason, I kind of wanted to prolong the conversation, but I knew she was probably cold and wet, and wanted to get back inside.

"I expect a full explanation tomorrow morning." she informed me. "My axe needs sharpening, anyway, I was planning to get that done. So, tomorrow. You better be in the forge so I can interrogate you."

I nodded. "Right. I'll try and see if I can figure out Toothless' motives for disturbing two perfectly innocent people from sleep."

Again with the innocent look.

"C'mon, let's go," I urged him as Astrid disappeared back inside. Toothless put a paw on the spot where the metal plate was buried and I sighed wearily. "Again? Toothless, I have no idea what that means, okay? Please can we just go home and can I ask Stoick about it tomorrow?"

Toothless gave the equivalent of a dragon sigh, nodded sadly and gave me a gentle push with his nose in the direction of Stoick's house.

BOOM.

Another clap of thunder and I shuddered a little, quickening my pace as the unpleasant thoughts began to plague me again. Why did Thor want me off the island so badly?

## 60. Father's Day

Untold

### Chapter 60 - Father's Day

Summary: Hiccup has a day down at Thor's Beach with family and friends.

**\*\*A/N:** God, I'm proud I got this! Happy Father's Day, everybody! This was based off a drawing RazzlePazzleDooDot made for me C: it had Hiccup from this AU with his head in Stoick's lap and he was all asleep and I was like OH MY GOSH THE CUTE SO I HAD TO WRITE SOMETHING FOR IT DO YOU UNDERSTAND I JUST HAD TO AND THIS IS THE RESULT.\*\*

**\*\*Furthermore,** Hiccup really is a damsel in distress in my stories, huh? In my defense, it's not like Astrid can be. In my defense, it leaves room for fatherly Stoick! In my defense...in my defense...oh, forget it, I just love damsel-in-distress Hiccup XD \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Judging by how cold it grew on Berk in the wintertime, I was willing to bet that I'd find the summers to be pleasant and cool. Yet again, the island surprised me. The sun beat relentlessly down on the sand in the days leading up to June, and I woke up on what was surely the hottest day of the year, drenched in sweat, my blanket rolled up in a ball on the floor. I couldn't even remember if Outcast Island was hotter than this, because I hadn't experienced their midday summer for awhile. I was content to just lie there for a few more minutes before actually getting up and facing the sun, but thumps and crashes from downstairs made me open the door and amble out onto the landing. Stoick was normally gone when I woke up in the mornings, although occasionally he came back to the house to grab something he needed.<p>

I had just decided that was what it was when I wandered into the kitchen and saw him lugging a basket of clothing in one hand, and, in the other, a basket of food.

"What's that stuff for?" I asked, running my fingers through my

hair.

Stoick set them down by the front door and offered me a smile. "Well, good morning, sleepyhead," he teased. "Somebody slept late. These are just the supplies for the celebration this afternoon."

"Celebration?" I repeated blankly.

"Yeah, you might want to get changed into your summer clothes," Stoick ruffled my hair casually as he passed by. "I'm surprised you haven't already."

The profound and intelligent answer that tumbled off my tongue was, "Whaâ€¦uhâ€¦Iâ€¦summer clothes?"

"Yep," Stoick responded. "You know, one for work and winter, one for heat and play."

"Oh. I don't have any of that."

"Oh." Stoick blinked, but recovered quickly. "Well, then, you'll need to take off your vest at least. It'll be much too hot for that down there."

"Down where?"

"At the celebration."

"What celebration?" I asked, feeling like talking with Stoick sometimes brought me more questions than answers.

"You know, the summer solstice celebration," Stoick replied. "Haven't you ever celebrated it before?"

I shook my head.

"Oh." Stoick's cheerful smile disappeared and for a second, he looked upset. I felt uncomfortable under his pitying gaze, and I averted my eyes, hoping I could find a change of subject.

"Wellâ€¦" When I looked up, I could see a slightly forced smile on his face, "c'mon, then, and you'll have your first summer solstice celebration."

"You people celebrate a lot of things," I told him as he picked up the crates, pushed open the door and tugged me along, out into the blistering heat. "Is that a Berk thing?"

His eyes crinkled up into a smile. "We are known for our love of parties."

I didn't think to ask Stoick where we were going until we arrived, and I realized we were at Thor's beach. The place was packed with families, little kids running around after their parents, teenagers chatting and trying to distance themselves from their mothers, adults lounging on the sand.

I spotted the five teens standing in a semicircle. Ruffnut was apparently hitting Tuffnut for something, Snotlout's eyes were

sweeping the beach, Astrid was looking pretty content, and Fishlegs had his nose in a book (I envied him).

Gobber came walking over to us then, and I felt a large hand giving me a gentle shove forward, in the direction of the teens. "Go on," Stoick urged me quietly. "Go mingle."

I wasn't really the best at "mingling" and I intended to tell him so, except Gobber got his attention with saying something else, and Snotlout spotted me, threw an arm around my shoulders, and dragged me away, towards the others. "Look who decided to join the party!" he grinned. "We didn't think you'd ever get here, Hiccup. We were looking all over for you."

"Oh." I said awkwardly. "Well, um. I'm here now." I offered him a small smile. He didn't look impressed.

"Snotlout, Snotlout!" A little boy, all big gray eyes and overlarge Viking helmet, ran up to Snotlout and tugged on his arm. "Come build a sandcastle with me, please! Please can we enter the competition?"

"I thought it was supposed to be a—" But Snotlout interrupted himself before he could finish whatever he was going to say. He looked down at the boy for a minute and his eyes grew unexpectedly soft. "Yeah, I'll be right there, Gustav. You run along, I'll join you in a couple minutes, okay?"

Gustav smiled brightly and skipped away, apparently quite satisfied. I had never seen Snotlout look so sorry after coming so close to saying something he clearly shouldn't have. At my questioning look, he shrugged. "His father was killed in a dragon raid two years ago."

"Oh." That still didn't answer my question, but after news like that, questions seemed rude.

"That sandcastle competition is normally supposed to be a father/son thing," Snotlout added, when I looked no less confused. "Gustav really wanted me to join with him this week, and I couldn't figure out why." He shrugged. "I guess it's because you need two people on one team."

"Well, he seems to look up to you," I offered.

Snotlout shrugged. "Only because I'm friends with Hiccup the dragon conqueror."

"Dragon conqueror?" I repeated blankly.

"That's what Gustav calls you," he replied. "Seems to think you're the greatest thing since sliced bread. Me? I don't see it."

"Oh, haha," I replied dryly. "Thank you so much for that vote of confidence."

He grinned at me, before adjusting his helmet. "I'd better go help him get started. Last year we had a moat and everything, it was great." He smiled reminiscently. "I don't think we have time for that this year, though. You entering?"

"I don't have anyone to enter with," I responded honestly. "But I'll watch you guys if you want."

"Yes, you do, dork," he responded, the insult leaving his tongue easily. "Isn't Stoick your father?"  
>"Oh." I blushed a little. "Y-yeah, but he wouldn't want to do it with me. I mean, no. He probably wouldn't. He's a chief and all, you know, he wouldn't want to do it."<p>

"Huh." Snotlout shrugged. "Alright."

He wandered off to go help Gustav, and I didn't see him again until their sandcastle won second place in the contest. Gustav's smile looked like it was going to break his face if it grew any bigger, and it was weird to see Snotlout being so nice to someone. He was generally nice to me, but he also mixed it up with insults about my prosthetic leg or my small stature to make up for it.

"I'm gonna hang it on my wall," Gustav told Snotlout happily, and Snotlout just nodded and smiled, and pulled his Viking helmet off his head and carefully rearranged it so the kid could see where he was going and so it wouldn't slip over his eyes.

When Gustav was finished admiring the ribbon and had set it down in a relatively dry area away from the ocean, Snotlout got a mischievous grin on his face. He grabbed an abandoned wooden bucket and ran to the edge of the water. "The sandcastle contest is over!" he yelled gleefully. "I think you know what that means! C'mon, Gustav!"

Unsure what he was going to do, I watched as Gustav chased after him, grabbing up his own pail on the way there. They both filled their buckets to the brim with seawater and, without warning, Snotlout flew by me, threw the whole contents of the bucket on me, soaking me through and ran away in hysterics. "Water fight!" he announced as he was making his escape.

"Water fight?" I shouted incredulously after him, but the only response I received was a joyful laugh.

I shook my head at his disappearing figure before Tuffnut thrust a bucket in my hands. "Get some ammo. This is gonna turn ugly."

I looked down at my bucket for a second, hesitating before approaching the ocean. I scooped up a bit of the water in my bucket, trying not to go too far in, and looked around for Snotlout's retreating back. I couldn't find him, so I threw the contents on the yellow and blue blur to my left. \_Big mistake\_.

I'd assumed that was Fishlegs or Gobber, but it turned out to be Astrid. And Astrid, I discovered, did not take things lightly. Not only did she retaliate instantly with water of her own, she also punched me. Hard.

"Ow!" I protested, rubbing my shoulder. "What was that for?"

"Wetting me," she replied with a shrug before plunging back into the fray.



"You wet me!" I called after her. "And I didn't punch you!"

The next couple times went exactly like the first: I was careful not to go too far into the water, but by the fifth time, I was wading a whole three feet in, and the water hadn't bothered me at all. I allowed a small smile to cross my face as I leaned down to scoop up some more ammo.

I felt somebody barreling over me, I felt their elbow slamming down on the back of my head. Pain exploded in my skull, my knees buckled and I went down, beneath the surface of the water. My vision tinted black and I tried weakly to reach up towards that fading circle of light, but I found I couldn't reach.

It could have been seconds or minutes that I floated down there, but I know that at one point, darkness fell over me, and the circle of light disappeared from my vision. But air rushed towards me soon after, stinging my soaked skin, wind pushing back my hair, but I hardly cared because I could breathe again.

"Hiccup, I'm so sorry!" Snotlout's eyes were wide with panic as he leaned over me, one hand on my chest like he was about to do compressions. "I'm so sorry, are you okay?"

I nodded and tried to say 'yeah', but I ended up coughing first. I saw a few people standing over me — Astrid, Fishlegs, Gobber and Stoick, their faces the picture of concern.

"I'm okay," I squeaked, my voice scratchy from swallowing saltwater. "I'm fine, just — you know, go about your business."

"I'm really sorry," Snotlout repeated.

Stoick knelt down next to me, putting a hand on my back, pushing me up, and he just kept repeating, "Are you alright? Are you hurt? I'm so sorry, are you alright?"

I just kept trying to shove him away, but it's not easy to do that when he's checking you for injuries. "Stoick, Stoick, really, I'm fine!" I insisted before reassuring Snotlout of the same things. "No, you didn't hurt me," I told him. "You just hit me on the head and sent me under, I'm okay —"

Despite the fact that I'd avoided going near water for a couple years, it wasn't like Snotlout had meant to do it. The panic slowly eased, loosening its grip on me. This was a good thing for me, because it meant my hands stopped shaking whenever I tried to push Stoick away. He threw his arms around me, clutching me to him so tightly that I felt like I couldn't breathe all over again.

"Stoick, you're crushing me," I pleaded, trying my hardest to push him away, despite the fact that a part of me was pleased with all the attention.

"Why didn't you just swim up?" asked Fishlegs, ever logical and unsympathetic.

I coughed up a bit more water, wishing he hadn't asked. I decided being casual about it was the best route. "Eh, I just never learned how," I shrugged, finally breaking free of Stoick's embrace and

taking to my feet. Even my good leg betrayed me, wobbling slightly.

Stoick gently guided me back down and Snotlout's eyes widened, like he couldn't comprehend what I had just said. "You mean, you \_never\_ learned to swim?" he asked in disbelief.

"Noâ€|" I mumbled, knowing why he couldn't really believe it. Most Vikings learned to swim when they were really young, but Alvin had never taught me, and Halfdan trying to drown me kind of put a dent in my enthusiasm to learn. "Now, can you guys let me up?"

Instantly, everybody backed away, except Stoick. He helped me slowly to my feet, brought me to a standing position and asked quietly, "Do you want to go home?"

I actually wanted him to stop treating me like a defenseless puppy, but I didn't say so. "Nope, I'm good if you are."

"Hmâ€|" he studied me for a few minutes critically, looking me over one more time before apparently deciding that I was okay to stay a few more minutes. "Alright, well, justâ€|be careful, alright?"

It was kind of obvious that 'be careful' meant 'stay with me' because he kind of stuck with me throughout the rest of the afternoon. And as afternoon faded slowly into evening and the sun began to set, everybody sat down by the ocean, watching the tide come in and the sun disappear in a blazing red and gold display.

I could feel myself beginning to get tired from all the activity and I yawned a little, resting my cheek on my hand. I didn't even realize how close Stoick was to me until my face found his shoulder.

I felt him laughing more than I heard him, and I felt him reach up and gently ruffle my hair. He tugged me gently until I was laying down, my cheek resting against something scratchy and rough, but I just allowed my eyes to close again as he began to brush my hair away from my forehead.

He'd seemed so uptight after I'd went under the water earlier today, and now he seemed so lighthearted that I didn't want to spoil it, so I just let him gently push my hair away from my forehead and I let sleep overtake me.

## 61. Vikings Don't Part I

Untold

### Chapter 61 - Vikings Don't... Part 1

Summary: Hiccup has been taught a lot over the years. But the things that stick with him? All the things Vikings \_don't\_ do, the things they're not \_supposed\_ to do.

\*\*A/N: Hi, guys :D I got this written, it's a new arc :D I'm reallyyyy sorry about starting a new arc, eep, please forgive me. But, but but! This includes angst about Hiccup's childhood! :D I just love writing that XD these are going to look back to when Hiccup is a certain age. For this one, it looks back to when he's six and then

back to when he's sixteen. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>1. Vikings Don't Get Nightmares<strong>

The faceless man clutched a sword in his dominant hand, sneering down at my dad. My daddy stared bravely back at him, unsheathing his own weapon. My heart clenched.

"\_Daddy!" My voice cracked and it came out quieter than I wanted it to. \_

\_Daddy turned to me, and there was a sad smile on his lips. "Step out of the way, Hiccup. This is a man's fight." \_

"\_No, Daddy, I can help!" I insisted, trying madly to cling to him as he set me down on the sand and patted my head.\_

"\_Not yet, you can't," he told me sternly. "It's my job to defend my island and your job to listen to me." \_

\_I nodded sadly, releasing his hand reluctantly. Even my dream self knew when to back down. \_

\_Daddy turned to face the faceless man, only to find the man inches from him. How had he gotten there? I couldn't remember. \_

\_One quick plunge from the faceless man's sword, and the deed was done: Daddy crumpled, blood beginning to pour out.\_

\_I screamed, my heart pumping loud in my ears. "Daddy!" \_

My eyes snapped open and I sat bolt upright in bed, throwing off the covers and scrambling downstairs as quick as I could. When I reached his bedroom, I dove into his arms, under the covers. "Daddy, Daddy, wake up!"

My daddy jerked awake, looking questioningly around himself "Hiccup?" he rasped. "What are you doing?"

"Daddy, I had a nightmare!" I gabbled, my nose going all stuffy, the way it did when I was about to cry. "It was horrible, I thought you were gone forever!"

He picked me up by the arms and set me down on the floor. "Go back to sleep, Hiccup."

"Daddy," I pleaded. "Please, it was so scary! May I stay with you?"

"No." He replied shortly. "Vikings don't get nightmares, Hiccup. Don't be weak."

\* \* \*

><p>My prosthetic groaned slightly beneath me as I descended the staircase, trying to mind the creakier steps. I reached the bottom of the stairs quietly, and slipped into Stoick's room, looking around for him. The sound of his soft snoring directed my gaze in the

darkness and I reached out a hand until I felt his covers. There he was, breathing evenly. I reached out a hand to touch him, wanting to wake him, to be held and reassured that he was okay, that I was okay.<p>

But I took my hand away before I woke him, and I went back upstairs. Toothless tilted his head confusedly when I reentered the room, but I just shook my head.

"Go back to sleep," I whispered to him as I crawled under the covers.

No need to wake Stoick, I insisted to myself. Vikings didn't get nightmares.

## 62. All I Ever Wanted

Untold

### Chapter 62 - All I Ever Wanted

Summary: A second part to the 'Father's Day' one shot. A look into Stoick's mind instead.

\*\*A/N: Thank you guys for all the reviews! We're almost at 500! :D  
\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Gobber never understood why I didn't tell Hiccup that it was Father's Day that day. He told me Hiccup would have gladly celebrated with me, but he could never understand that I didn't want Hiccup to celebrate me. I didn't care about that. I didn't want him to lower his gaze to the sand and mumble something awkward that sounded like it belonged on a greeting card, because I honestly just didn't care. Gobber could never understand that, and I never explained why I never told him, either.<p>

But the thing Gobber didn't understand was that I didn't want Hiccup to be awkward and tense, not when he looked so happy, so content and peaceful. I had never seen him smile that big before, and watching him get into the water fight with Snotlout and the others made my heart leap. Gobber couldn't understand it, but then, nobody ever could. The thing was, all of these other kids had grown up doing normal, everyday kid things, but Hiccup hadn't. The way he spoke sometimes, the surprise so evident on his face whenever someone was nice to him seemed to suggest that he had never been really accepted by anyone but a dragon. And no other father would ever understand what I felt then. I felt such joy and pride, and I didn't care if he didn't know it was Father's Day, because he had such a bright smile on his face and that was all I'd ever wanted to see. All I'd ever wanted was to see my son smiling, looking happy, looking accepted, looking loved, having \_fun\_.

And after sixteen years, I had finally gotten it.

## 63. Vikings Don't Part II

Untold

## Chapter 63 - Vikings Don't Part II

Summary: Continuation of Vikings Don't...

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, so a bit of Hiccup angst, I guess? Feel free to mock it if it's dumb, I was in a hurry. Oh my gosh, 500 reviews? You people are amazing :) Take the next part to the arc that got the most votes. I think this chapter pushes me over 90k, but I can't tell. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p><strong>2. Vikings Don't Feel Pain<strong>

"Ow!" I yelled, clutching at my painfully skinned knee with both hands, looking up at my father as he walked right by me. "Daddy, I scraped my knee," I sniffled, limping pathetically after him, my fingers clutching at the offending area.

Daddy looked down at me and sniffed disapprovingly, raising an eyebrow. "You did what?" he barked harshly.

"I scraped my knee," I repeated, and he scowled as he pushed the door open for us.

"You scraped your knee?" he repeated scathingly. "Tripping over the steps, I suppose. You're such a klutz. Man up, Hiccup. A real Viking doesn't feel pain."

I flinched at the words, biting my lip. "Iâ€¦|Iâ€¦|"

"You need to learn to take things like a man," he snapped. "You're useless in every other respect."

I could feel the tears building in my eyes and I took a step away from him, hardly able to believe what he was saying to me. I would admit that he wasn't like those other fathers who tucked their sons in and ruffled their hair and played catch with them, but didn't he care? Every father cared when their son was hurtâ€¦|right?

I glanced back down at the scrape, but it was barely even bleeding. He was right, he was absolutely right. I was just stupidly pining for attention, the way I always was, the way Halfdan always told me I was. I should just learn to shut up and take it like a man.

\* \* \*

><p>The pain was so bad, it prevented sleep. I was biting down so hard on my tongue I tasted blood just to resist the urge to scream. It felt like hot knives were ripping at the nerve endings, making it impossible for me to even close my eyes. I sat up in bed, and the pain eased very slightly. This slight change made me feel oddly triumphant. Real Vikings didn't feel pain, and I was probably getting better at beating it back.<p>

Toothless moaned worriedly, coming up and resting his head in my lap, making me wince. He withdrew his head with a worried look, and I shook my head. "I'm fine, I'm fine, Toothless." I offered him a slightly strained smile. "Vikings don't feel pain. I can take

it."

As if to challenge my statement, the agony increased, and I winced again, my hands going instantly to the painful stump that had once been my leg.

Toothless' worried look didn't fade.

"I'm okay," I insisted gently, pushing him away and laying back down, staring up at the ceiling. I was a Viking, and Vikings did not feel pain.

## 64. Vikings Don't Part III

Untold

### Chapter 64 - Vikings Don't Part III

Summary: Continuation of 'Vikings Don't.'

**\*\*A/N:** Woo! Way longer than last time. Sorry about that \*sheepish smile\* and sorry about the weakling/damsel-in-distress Hiccup. I got two excuses for you: **\*\***

**\*\*1.** I love it**\*\***

**\*\*2.** It's supposed to flip from a certain age to his current one in TBLTWYLM, if I may say, so of course his sixteen year old self is going to act a bit young when it's supposed to mirror his child self. In this case, he's twelve.**\*\***

**\*\*P.S:** I saw HTTYD 2 on Monday AND HOLY FREAKING COW **\*\***

**\*\*THE FEEELS BHL;YHMNHJUNBXV [;JFPH[ VLGPVMHYJHNBV THE**  
**\*\***

**\*\*FREAKING\*\***

**\*\*FEELS \*\***

**\*\*But no spoilers! :DDD** I wrote three one shots for the movie and then my feels were pretty much gone, so I was ready to go back to this :D**\*\***

**\*\*P.P.S:** (I keep forgetting how many things to put in here, sorry) Sorry about all the swearing. Swearing is actually a great stress reliever, and I can envision this AU Hiccup swearing up a blue streak whenever he's upset or angry. **\*\***

**\* \* \***

><p><strong>3. Vikings Don't Cry <strong>

I could feel my father beside me, his huge hand encasing my upper arm easily, dragging me away from the scene as the other Outcasts wordlessly began to tie up Toothless, or tried to. I couldn't help but feel a bit proud when I saw Toothless putting up a terrific fight. Savage reached over and dealt him a fierce blow with his axe, and Toothless dropped to the ground, covering his face, a bit of

blood leaking out onto the ground.

"No!" I tried to break free from my father's grip, tried to get away, get back to my dragon. "No! Toothless! Father, please make them stop!" I looked up at him, but my dad's eyes were steely and cold as he glared down at me. He didn't say a word, but he didn't have to; right now, he was seriously scaring me.

"Father!" I began uncomfortably as he jumped easily up onto the porch of our house, gave one last look at the commotion down below as people attempted to restrain Toothless, and then tugged me into darkness. He didn't light a candle when we reached the house, he just shut the door, plunging us into blackness. "I should have known," he said jerkily, pacing back and forth in front of me. "I should have seen it. I always knew this was going to happen, you good-for-nothing traitor!" He yelled the last bit, turning suddenly to glare coldly at me, and I flinched back, tripping over myself and landing on my butt.

I tried to get back up as he resumed his pacing, his hands curling into fists as he spoke. "Halfdan had suspicions about you. I wanted to give you the benefit of the doubt, but I should have known. When somebody's as stupid and useless as you are!" I should never have done that. What the hell were you thinking?"

"Father, you don't understand," I began earnestly, putting a gentle hand on his arm. "It's not stupid or useless to befriend dragons, they're really nice, actually! Toothless never tried to hurt me once, because I approached him calmly and"

"Well, it's only a matter of time, then!" he snapped before I could finish my sentence. "He'll hurt you one day! Beasts like that can't be reasoned with!"

"He's not a beast!" My own anger began to rise, beating back the fear. I had to prove to my father that I was right, because if I didn't, something serious might happen to Toothless. "He's a friend! He's my best friend, and if you'd give him a chance, you'd see that"

"Dragons are not friends! Do friends attack friends?"

"They raid us because they have to! They need the food!"

"Enough, Hiccup! I don't want to hear any more of your excuses!"

"Father, wait!" I cried desperately as he began to walk towards the door. "Wait, wait, wait, don't do this, please, please just listen to me, and you'll see!" I began to run after him, tripping over myself just trying to keep pace with his unbelievably long strides. He reached the door and put a hand on the wood, beginning to open up.

"Listen to me!" It was the loudest, most impressive yell I had ever given, and it had the desired effect; it caused my father to pause, take his hand off the door, and look down at me. "Just listen! Toothless is a really good dragon, won't you please give him a chance?" I was speaking quickly, terrified that he would decide, like he always did with me, that this wasn't worth his time and simply

walk away while I was still speaking. "You should see him when he doesn't feel threatened, heâ€|he becomes the most playful dragon I have ever met, and he's so gentle, you wouldn't believe how he could be the same dragon that attacks us! He's so gentleâ€"

"Enough, Hiccup." He repeated tonelessly, easily detaching himself and reaching for the door again. Except this time, his words drove a stake of anger straight through my heart. Even now, when it really mattered, he couldn't listen to me.

"Just open your ears!" I yelled angrily. "You're too blinded by hatred and you're too ignorant to seeâ€"

SMACK.

I was sent tumbling to the ground, holding my face, feeling tears filling my eyes from the unexpected pain. I stared up at him for a second in horror, and I waited for him to look contrite, to apologize. He glared down at me coldly. "Any boy who stands up for dragons," he began quietly, but every word seemed to echo, "is no son of mine."

A few of the tears slipped out from my eyes and my father shook his head with a sneer, and I could read the expression on his face, even if he didn't say the words: Vikings don't cry.

I gave a slight hiccup as I tried to stem the flow of tears. My father just pushed open the door and left me sitting there in the darkness as he pulled the door closed on me.

Vikings didn't cry, I told myself as I mopped at my eyes.

\* \* \*

><p>It was so stupid. It was so <em>stupid<em>. I was so stupid. Why was I so weak? I was supposed to be a man, a Viking. I knew I should get up to my room and get in bed, but I honestly didn't know if I could.

That was another maddening thing about today: I felt so restricted, so restrained. I couldn't do anything by myself anymore, not even walking. I needed Toothless to be my crutch for a simple walk outside, and it hurt if I moved my leg too much whenever we went flying. These were perfectly valid reasons to be sitting there like I was, clutching at the stump that the Outcasts had left me with.

But no. The lack of independence wasn't what was upsetting me, although it was the thing that had pushed me over the edge. The reason I was sniveling like a five-year-old at the kitchen table was because it hurt. The physical pain kept sending waves of agony through the thigh, and I was gripping the edge of the table with a white-knuckled grip from the pain. And it hurt because it had suddenly hit me why the pain was so constant, so agonizingly blinding that I could barely do anything but lie there groaning whenever it hit. It just suddenly clicked in my brain that day that I had lost a part of myself and that it freaking hurt all the time, and that it was never coming back. And that's the reason why I was busy being a weakling the way I was. And, you know, what else is new?

And, as if this day couldn't get any worse, what with the constant



throbbing in my leg and the pitying looks from Gobber and the other villagers as I limped along, their eyes silently accusing me of the weakness I couldn't get rid of, the front door creaked open and I sighed.

\_Oh, no.\_

Stoick was home. He was going to come sit at the kitchen table and put on some dinner, and he was probably going to try and talk to me while I was down here, and he would surely hear the pain in my voice. So, I set myself a simple task: walk upstairs. Shouldn't be too hard, right? I could get on Toothless after all, I could lean on him a bit if the pain got too bad. Weak, but it was the only way I was going anywhere tonight.

Of course, the first incredibly simple task leading up to getting up the stairs was rising from my chair. And it was so stupid, and so weak, but I didn't know if I \_could\_ \_get\_ up. It literally felt like there was a fire licking at my leg, and it hurt like nothing I had ever felt to put weight on it. I hesitated on the verge of standing, gripping the table with my right hand, using my left to push myself up. I debated on whether or not this was a good idea, but it was the only way I was going to escape Stoick's questions about why I was in pain. Vikings didn't feel pain. I was not going to be his exception to that rule.

I slowly put my right leg on the floor and then, after a long moment of hesitation, which only came to an end when I heard Stoick shutting the door, I reached out to put my left leg on the floor. I put my arms out for balance and took a step forward. Not only did the pain cause me to cry out, I also landed squarely on my butt, held in place by my prosthetic, which had somehow managed to catch itself on the leg of the chair.

I landed on the wooden floor and, to my utter horror, I burst into tears. I hated it, hated being so helpless and weak and stupid and useless, and this stupid, useless prosthetic only made it worse.

"Hiccup? Are you okay?" Stoick came charging into the kitchen, and I wanted to brush him off and brush the tears away, but I couldn't, and even if I could, I couldn't even leave the freaking kitchen \_anyway\_, so I just sat there and shook my head as he came closer to me.

"Hiccup, what's wrong?" he whispered, kneeling beside me, and clapping a massive hand on my shoulder. "Where does it hurt, son?"

I put a hand on my leg where the flesh ended and the wood began, the stupid, weak tears blurring my vision so much I couldn't see. "It hurts," I sobbed. "It hurts."

His eyes softened. "I'm sorry, son," he whispered, scooting closer to me and taking my hand. He gave it a bit of a squeeze. "I know it's gonna hurt, and I wishâ€¦I wish I could take it away for you, Hiccup."

"I can't do anything!" I cried, swiping at my eyes. "I can't do anything by myself anymore, it hurts too much! I can't walk anymore, I'm so slow with everything I do! I can't even cross the damn \_room\_

anymore!"

"I'm sorry," Stoick kissed my head and pulled me into a hug, stroking my hair. "I'm sorry, Hiccup. If I could have taken the injury instead of you, I would have in a heartbeat."

"Trust me, you don't want this," I sniffed, the temperature in the room suddenly spiking about thirty degrees, and then some, when I realized I was bawling my eyes out because of a stupid metal leg.

"No, I don't," he admitted. "But I want it more now that I see the alternative."

"You don't want this," I murmured again, because it was so goddamn \_embarrassing\_ that I was crying like a baby in front of Stoick the Vast, who probably made onions cry. Toothless moaned and crooned, trying to stick his nose into our hug. I gave him a grateful half-smile and scratched him under the chin for an excuse to avoid looking at Stoick as I wiped at my eyes.

"I'm sorry," I mumbled when I thought I was brave enough, wiping my eyes on my sleeve one final time before facing him. "I'm really sorry, I'm gonnaâ€"

"What are you sorry for?" he interrupted gently.

"It'sâ€|it's weak to cry like this," I muttered, deciding at the last second to stay where I was for a bit longer. I didn't want to fall again. "V-Vikings don't cry." I sniffled a little, and wiped my nose.

"Hiccup, where did you hear that?"

"Umâ€|" As if the day hadn't been bad enough, I had to drag Alvin's stupid butt into the conversation as well. "A-Alvin said it to meâ€|a lot. And it's true, it's weakâ€"

"Hiccup. Wait." Stoick squeezed my shoulder a bit to calm me. "Do you even hear yourself?"

"I think soâ€|?"

"Vikings don't cry? Really?"

"You don't," I reminded him. "And you're like the essence of everythingâ€"

"Do you know what I did when I saw your face?"

"Probably shielded some innocent person's eyes so they wouldn't go blind."

"No. I tried to deal with you as best as I could, and then I went home and I cried my eyes out for almost two hours."

"Iâ€|I didn't think I was \_that\_ ugly."

"No, you misunderstand," he persisted. "What I mean is, I cried because you look like my wife. I would have sworn on my life that you

were my blood son when I first met you, Hiccup. And I didn't even know anything about you. That's why I cried. I was so happy, so overjoyed by the idea that I still had a family member somewhere, but I cried because I was so upset by the idea that you weren't mine as well."

"That'sâ€¦that's different." I pulled at the edge of my sleeve for a second, relieved that I found a loose thread as an excuse to avoid looking at him. "You'reâ€¦you're different, I mean, you can be afford to be a little less than everything Viking sometimes, and besides that, that's because you lost your whole family and you were upset. This is just some stupid injuryâ€¦"

"Hiccup, do you know what Gobber did when he lost his arm?"

"That's diffâ€¦"

"He cried, too. He had phantom pain, he was just as frustrated by his helplessness as you were. But you know what? Ever since then, ever since he's allowed himself to feel sad about losing it, he's been so much happier. Haven't you noticed how many amputee jokes he makes at his own expense?"

The thought of Gobber laughing at himself in the forge when he was telling me a story and added, "And I tell ya, I was \_stumped\_" made me smile a little. "Iâ€¦"

"There's nothing weak about it, Hiccup. Crying is a part of being human, and no matter how tough you are, you can't stop yourself from being human, as well."

"Iâ€¦I guess thatâ€¦kinda, sorta makes sense."

"Of course it does," he responded. "I said it." He smiled a little at his own joke before the ground suddenly fell away from me.

I gave a slight yelp, clutching at his arm, digging my nails into his skin but he just laughed a little.

"Sorry," he said ruefully. "I should have warned you."

"What are you doing?" I asked, pushing lightly against his chest. "Let me go."

"I'm not making you walk up those stairs when your leg is hurting you."

"I'll be fine. Put me down."

"Next time you're in pain, you can walk it off if you so wish. This time I'm taking you so you don't have to walk."

"I want to walk."

"No, you don't."

"I \_should\_ walk, then. I'll never get better if you don't let me try."

"You walk every day."

He looked very smug as I seethed. "Whatever."

"Uh-huh." He nodded, heading for the stairs. "That's what I thought."

Toothless scampered after us, crooning in a worried sort of way, trying to see what was wrong with me.

"I'm okay," I assured my dragon. "Some people just overreact."

"You said yourself you're having trouble walking today. Hush."

"Whatever."

## 65. Vikings Don't Part IV

Untold

### Chapter 65 - Vikings Don't Part IV

Summary: Continuation of 'Vikings Don't'.

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, got a bit to say about this one! For one, I'm sorry about the total overload of fluff in the second scene. I've been writing so much angst lately, I realized Stoick/Hiccup father/son fluff really cheers me up :3 so I had to write this. Furthermore, this was sorta inspired by shadowpiratemonkey97's drawing: "No, Dad! Vikings aren't ticklish!" because ASDFGHJKL;BGDCFVBGHUHBGFRFVFDRC \*rolls around on the floor\* \*howls at the moon\* \*generally bleeds feels all over\* FEELSFEELSFEELSFEELS DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I LOVE THAT DRAWING OH GOSH :DDD Also, I just really needed a way to purge my feels after HTTYD 2 freaking ripped them out ;-; why did it have to do that ;-; **\*\***

**\*\*Secondly,** you might notice an abrupt ending where angst would have fit nicely. Shut up, okay, I wanted fluff so I had to steer the conversation in a fluffy direction while also trying to give the fic substance. It's not easy. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p><strong>4. Vikings Aren't Ticklish <strong>

"Where is he?!"

I heard the shouts from a couple feet ahead, but I didn't bother trying to catch up with the group; there was an interesting meadow of flowers up ahead that looked way more fun than listening to Gust, who had taken me, Halfdan, and a couple other boys out for a hike around the island. I could tell he was probably going to be annoyed about me wandering off again, but I just wanted to see the flowers. Was that so wrong? And, also, I kind of wanted an excuse to avoid Halfdan.

"Whoa!" I went slipping in a puddle as Gust and Halfdan doubled back to see the bushes beginning to rustle.

"Ooh!" Halfdan cried. "Do you think it's a dragon? Do ya, do ya, do ya?"

"Dragons have no need to hide in the bushes," I responded. "We're more scared of them, remember?"

"How do you know so much about dragons?" he demanded, looking at me like I was crazy. I shrugged uncomfortably, my mind instantly flitting to the Night Fury still waiting for me in the cove. I couldn't wait to get away from them and see him.

The bushes parted to reveal a white bunny rabbit that, in a single bound, jumped out from behind the bushes, used my stomach as a launching pad and jumped away again. I giggled when its furry paws landed on my skin and Halfdan gave me another strange look. "What was that?" He demanded.

"A bunny."

"No, I know that." He sent me a scathing look. "That laugh. You sounded like a girl."

"I'm sorry," I said, slightly defensively. "Its paws tickled me."

He rolled his eyes in disbelief. "Wow. And here I thought you couldn't get any more useless. Vikings aren't ticklish, Hiccup! I can't believe you're supposed to be our next chief—Odin help us all—"

I blushed, looking around into the bushes where I knew the bunny had disappeared before turning and rejoining the hike with a sigh.

\* \* \*

><p>I didn't want to get out of bed at all. But I knew Stoick wanted me to. In fact, I knew he'd been waiting for the day in which we would officially get our pictures painted and have it hung in the Great Hall, and I knew he'd been waiting for awhile, but it was midwinter, and bitterly cold and I was warm. And I really, really didn't want to get out of bed.<p>

So I just lay there for a couple more minutes, my eyes closed against the vivid orange glare of the sun on my lids, vowing to myself that the next time Stoick called, I would get up.

That next call came way too soon.

"Hiccup!" Stoick called, bounding into the room, the door creaking as he pushed it open. "Hiccup, what are you still doing in bed? We have to be at the Great Hall in thirty minutes—"

"I'll be up." I mumbled, sinking deeper into the pillow. "I'll be up in a minute, I promise—"

"Are you just going to sleep all day?!"

"I \_said\_ I'll be right up!"

"You're not getting there very fast," he responded.

"I can be at the Great Hall in thirty minutes, okay? I'll be up in ten."

Stoick huffed in annoyance and I closed my eyes, allowing myself to relax as I began to think he really would leave me alone.

"Oh, wellâ€|" he sighed, sitting down on the bed. "If you won't get up, I guess I'll just have to convince you."

"It's cold, though," I moaned. "I don't want to get up yet."

"Oh, I'm persuasive when I want to be," he promised. His words made me open my eyes a bit to see him tugging my blanket off and lifting up my shirt.

"What are you even doing?" I mumbled blearily. "I'll be up in a second, don't try to make me cold."

But cold wasn't exactly the effect he was going for. It was something infinitely worse, I realized when he grinned and said simply, "Of course not." And then he began to tickle my side.

I laughed, trying to push him off as best I could, my strength drained from laughter. "No, no, no! Stop it, stop it! Please!"

Stoick was laughing, too as he moved onto my stomach, easily pushing my arms away. "You could have avoided this hassle had you just gotten up, but oh, noâ€|"

"Stop!" I pleaded, my laugh becoming a little more high-pitched and a little less Viking-esque as it quickly became uncontrollable. "Stop it, stop it, you're not supposed to do this, Vikings aren't ticklish!"

For a second, Stoick continued to tickle me, but then his smile faded and he gently pulled his hand away. "What?"

"V-Vikingsâ€|" I gasped for breath, trying to push his hand away from my exposed skin. "Aren'tâ€|aren't ticklish."

"Where did youâ€|you know what, I'm not even sure I want to \_know\_ where you get some of these things anymore."

I scowled at him, crossing my arms over my chest. "It's \_true\_. We're not."

"Well, it doesn't look like it's true in this case," he responded.

I huffed. "I was taken by surprise."

"You're so stubborn, you know that?" he chuckled lightly.

"Yeah, can't imagine where I get \_that\_ from."

"Your stubbornness and mine are very different," Stoick replied. "At least I don't try to pointlessly deny things when somebody can tell they're true."

"Like what?" I demanded.

He raised an eyebrow. "Vikings aren't ticklish?" He quoted.

I blushed. "It's true!"

"Clearly not," he responded, running a hand across my stomach again, causing me to give a laugh, trying to squirm away from his grip.

"Stop it! I'm up now, okay!"

He gave me a bit of a smile. "Okay, okay. I'm done. Promise."

"Thank you." I huffed.

His smile faded slightly. "Hiccup."

"Never again," I told him, trying to be threatening. Not the best route, considering I had my arms wrapped around my torso in case he decided to break his promise. "Okay?"

"Hiccup, no listen to me," he said softly, taking my hand. "I want you stop denying things you can't help, okay?"

"What do you mean?"

"You say that Vikings don't cry, that they aren't ticklish, thatâ€|that they don't even need to breathe, the way you talk! You hold yourself to a superhuman standard and that'sâ€|I won't let you do that anymore."

"It's not a superhuman standardâ€"

"Things like crying and being ticklish are human nature. And I want you to quit acting like you don't have that. I want you to stop thinking you have to be stronger than you are. Can you do that for me?" He brushed my bangs out of my eyes, which were slightly sweaty from all the laughing and squirming around I'd done just minutes ago.

I looked down at my hands in my lap. "Iâ€|it's not really a superhuman standard, I meanâ€"

He raised an eyebrow, and I knew I had lost.

"I'll try," I admitted. "Butâ€|it's hard, sometimes, to tell the difference between things Vikings really don't do, and things I think Vikings don't do. I just can't reallyâ€|get it."

"Don't worry," he responded, kissing my forehead lightly and taking his hand away, so my hair fell right back into my eyes. "I'll help you. Now, c'mon. That portrait's not going to paint itself!"

He rose from the bed and moved to the door. I smiled a little, shaking my head before pulling my shirt down and walking after him. At least he had had the desired effect of waking me up.

Untold

## Chapter 66 - I'm With You Part XX

Summary: Continuation of 'I'm With You'.

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, guys. I decided to just give you two chapters tonight instead of one, because I had two written and they were both pretty short. I hope you don't feel bombarded/whatever about this and hope you just enjoy the delicious angst :3 I know I am xD Anyway, what more to say in this AN? Oh, I wrote this listening to "My Immortal" by Evanescence. Along with their "Sweet Sacrifice", "Call Me When You're Sober", "Lithium" and, I think, "Snow White Queen"? I listened to a lot of The Open Door while I wrote this :3 I was really just going through my I-pod and playing whatever came on. I ran into the Frozen soundtrack somewhere along there, too, so first I'm totally jamming to some of Evanescence's darkest songs and then suddenly, 'Let it Go' and I'm just like what happened xD \*\*

**\*\*Oh,** speaking of which, I have a joke for you guys :D My friend told me how they measure electricity and I was like watt \*slaps knee\* okay, okay. I'm done. I promise. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>For a few moments, I simply sat and held Hiccup's shaking frame as he sobbed freely into my chest.<p>

"I'm so \_tired\_," he sobbed, a slight hiccup making its way out of his mouth as he tried to stop the tears. "I'm so tired of being scared and running and constantly having to look over my shoulderâ€|"

"You don't ever have to do that anymore," I whispered, wrapping my arms around him, trying to convey things I couldn't say with an embrace. "Never."

"Yes, I do," he sniffled brokenly. "I'm \_always\_ gonna have to."

"But you have me here now," I told him, gently brushing the tears off his face. "If you can let me in, and let me protect youâ€|then I would be a father to you, Hiccup. A better one than that man ever was."

"How can I be expected to let you in?" His chin was quivering, a sure sign that he was about to cry again. "I only found out that you were my blood father ten minutes ago!"

I dropped my gaze to the ground, hearing the unspoken words in his sentence. "Right. Iâ€|I know it's hard to acceptâ€|"

"Hard?" He sputtered. "Try impossible! Andâ€|" his shoulders slumped in defeat, as if he'd just remembered something. "And I'm not yours, anyway."

"What do you mean?"

His eyes looked unusually bright when his gaze found mine. "I'm his. He told meâ€|he told meâ€|" he sniffled and wiped his nose with the



back of his hand. "He owned me." His hand dropped away from his nose but instantly strayed to his wrist, where I knew the scar reading 'Mine' still was.

My anger flared just thinking about it, remembering when I'd gently pulled his tunic up over his head to replace it with Snotlout's, and seen all the scars Alvin had left on him. My beautiful boy was scarred because of Alvin. "You are not, Hiccup." The rage was clear in my voice. "You're not his. Not if you don't want to be."

"It doesn't matter!" He used his sleeve to wipe at puffy eyes as he spoke. "I'm always gonna be hunted by him, don't bother trying to make it better! Just let me go and I'll—I'll run, like I always do." He sounded tired and sad and broken when he said that last bit, but he didn't try to change the tone.

"Hiccup, Alvin's not coming after you."

"Don't try to lie! He always comes after me!"

"No, Hiccup, listen! Alvin's dead."

The boy froze. "What?"

"Alvin. He's dead. Toothless killed him." I tilted my head in the dragon's direction. He was currently trying to get Hiccup's attention, licking at the tears on his face, wrapping him in his wings.

For a moment, Hiccup sat there, unmoving, not speaking, as he processed this. And then he buried his face in my shirt and began to cry again.

"What's wrong?" I had just begun to hope that his crying fit was over for good, and now I was resigning myself to the fact that I might never understand all the reasons behind his tears.

"He's dead," Hiccup sobbed. "He's dead."

"Yes, he is. And you're safe."

"He's dead."

"He's never getting you again."

His sobs simply grew louder, and he didn't speak, just clutched at me like I was the only thing still tying him here.

As Toothless became a bit louder in his attempts to stem the boy's tears, Hiccup leaned into the dragon, never once releasing his grip on me.

"You're safe," I soothed, smoothing his hair back. "You're safe."

"I'm never safe," he whimpered softly. "Never."

"You are now," I told him gently. "I promise."

"Promises mean nothing," he sobbed, wiping his eyes on his sleeve

again. "I don't know why people bother to make them."

I took his good hand in mine and gave it a bit of squeeze. "This promise means something, Hiccup. All my promises do. Like, for instance, when Alvin took you away, I made my promise to myself to get you back. And I kept that, didn't I?"

"Why?" His voice was quivering as he spoke. "Why do you care so much about me?"

I gathered him slowly in my arms, happy to find Toothless nodding in silent permission. "Because you're my everything, Hiccup. You're my whole world."

He sniffed, wiping at his nose. "You must have a pretty empty world, then."

His weak attempt at humor in a moment like this had my own throat constricting. "Hiccupâ€¦" But I knew I couldn't say anything to make him see, so I just told him one thing, the only thing that I knew how to say, the one thing I hoped he would understand. I wondered if he had ever heard it before. "I love you," I sighed.

## 67. I'm With You Part XXI

Untold

Chapter 67 - I'm With You Part XXI

Summary: Continuation of 'I'm With You'.

**\*\*A/N:** My excuse for this chapter? They seriously have NOTHING for what infection looks like just after amputation, and no ways to tell it's infected, or anything, but I tried to write it to the best of my abilities. I'm not sure how accurate it is, but I honestly just couldn't find any good information. The closest I got was what to do if you're infected and they were suggesting medicines and stuff and I'm just like NO they're Vikings, they wouldn't have medicine back then! ;-; Not stuff that worked, anyway. Unless I'm missing something. Oh, I did a study of Vikings like, last month in school, I think? Interesting stuff :D Apparently, Cressida Cowell wasn't as inaccurate on history as I first thought :D you remember how Fishlegs was Berserk in book two? There actually ARE Vikings like that, or there were, anyway. Except, they got high on some kinda grass to get that way. You can't have your cake and eat it, too. That's the moral of that story. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup kept crying for a bit longer, until my shirt was soaked from his tears. When he finally sobbed his way into silence, it was only because his body finally had to release the anguish and rest.<p>

I stared down at his still body, brushing his hair out of his eyes. My heart ached with pain for him, but also with joy that I was finally holding my son in my arms. And he was beautiful, more beautiful than I could ever have asked for. And I knew that I wanted nothing more than for him to stay here forever, with me, and one day

find a way to ease his pain and heal his scars.

I knew I hadn't given him much incentive to do so, but I couldn't help hoping that he would. I didn't want to let him go. I just wanted to keep him safe, andâ€|andâ€|

\_Oh, no, \_I thought as I brushed the hair out of his eyes again. How had I not noticed the sheen of sweat on his blistering hot forehead, or the pink flush in his cheeks? No, no, no. He couldn't have another fever, not already. He needed time to heal from all his injuriesâ€|

He stirred a bit in my arms, rolling over so he faced me now. "No," his brow knitted.

Despite the situation, the worry faded a bit and warmth took its place. I couldn't help but feel a smile crossing my face as I looked down at his sleeping form. I remembered Val used to talk in her sleep all the time, too.

"No," he mumbled again, reaching up and yanking on my shirt, but there was no strength in his tiny fingers. "No, I don'tâ€|I don't want to belong to youâ€|Stoickâ€|\_Stoick's\_ my dad." His brow cleared slightly and he relaxed again in my arms. "Andâ€|and he loves me," he added, with a certainty in sleep that he never had in wakefulness.

I smiled as tears began making their way down my face as well, but I wasn't crying out of sadness; in fact, I had never been happier. My son was a beautiful Viking boy, and he was curled up in my arms, sleeping peacefully and unconsciously aware that I loved him. His fever would come down, I told myself encouragingly. He would be okay.

But, by the next day, it was considerably more than a little fever. Gobber came over to check up on us, and Hiccup was incoherent and rambling the whole time. Toothless wouldn't leave his side to even eat, no matter how many times I'd tried to tempt him away with fish. I just had to bring the food to the dragon, otherwise he'd starve.

"Suppose we check his hand now?" Gobber said when Hiccup began to thrash around in his sleep, clutching at his blanket like a lifeline and murmuring about fire.

"The fireâ€|it's everywhereâ€|" Hiccup choked, opening his eyes for the first time that morning. The emerald green eyes that had once sparkled with so much life were now dull and faded and empty, paler than they had been before, somehow, as if he wasn't really seeing me.

Gobber carefully unwrapped his bandage, barely paying attention to what Hiccup was saying, but I was. However, when he hissed and drew back suddenly, I began to ignore the boy, too.

"Gobber, what is it?" I rushed to his side, taking Hiccup's wrist and examining it tenderly.

"No, don't touch me!" Hiccup yelled, struggling to yank his hand free of my grip. "Don't touch me, stop touching me, all you ever do is hurt me!"

"He's just dreaming, Stoick," Gobber reminded me, and I realized I was staring down at the 'traitor' scar instead of the stump. "He doesn't mean what he's saying, he doesn't even know what he \_is\_ saying."

"Right?" I dropped my eyes to the stump instead, and fear suddenly seized me. "It's supposed to look like that, right?" I turned to my friend uncertainly, telling myself that bright pink skin with a slightly purple tinge, like a brand-new bruise, should not make me feel this scared. "Right?"

Gobber put a gentle hand on the wrist and went pale. "Stoick. Feel his stump."

His wrist just as scorching as the rest of him. "What's wrong?"

"He's not supposed to be this hot," Gobber whispered through pale lips. "We need Gothi and we need to get his fever down, because I think that wrist is infected."

## 68. First Fight

Untold

### Chapter 68 - First Fight

Summary: Hiccup and Stoick got along rather better than most fathers and sons, but they can still yell at each other, just like any other father and son...

\*\*A/N: Well, I know there will be people who won't enjoy this chapter because of how pointless and horrible it is and because of how bratty Hiccup acts. I'm really sorry. Thank you guys for the reviews and I promise the next chapter will be better. This is dedicated to Jayalaw, who requested an arc where Hiccup and Stoick go over all the bumps in the road, and I think this was a pretty important bump. So it's most probably the start of a new arc. \*\*

\*\*BUT NO OFFENSE MEANT JAYALAW BECAUSE YOU ARE A BEAUTIFUL PERSON AND YOUR REVIEWS ARE ALWAYS FULL OF PRAISE. I MEAN IT AS A COMPLIMENT AND I'M JUST SORRY IT'S HORRIBLE. I PROMISE THE REST OF THE ARC WILL BE BETTER...I HOPE. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>It was just a simple ride, really.<p>

I didn't intend to scare Stoick so badly, and looking back on it now, I see that's all he was: scared. He wasn't really angry with me, although his loud yelling and sudden strictness seemed to suggest otherwise.

You see, it was dusk, and the sun was setting, and there was a sort of brisk wind blowing when Gobber let me out of the forge for the day, and all Toothless and I had to do was look at each other and we both instantly knew. It was the perfect night for a flight.

I grabbed my harness from home and left my vest on my bed, scrambled downstairs and jumped on his back. Now we were soaring above the clouds, watching the sky turn pink and gold, other dragons flying above and below us. Toothless purred deep in his throat, and I understood his wordless contentment. Being with other dragons put us both at peace in a way almost nothing else could.

As night began to take over and the sun began to set for real, I looked down at my dragon, stroked his head gently, and smiled. We had just been gliding peacefully, but I was ready for my adrenaline rush, which never failed to make me smile. I slowly unbuckled myself from the saddle and stood up carefully on Toothless' back. When I saw how high up we were, my legs didn't shake, as they used to whenever I did this. I knew now that if I fell, Toothless would not hesitate to catch me. No matter what, I could count on him.

I jumped out of the saddle, freefalling through nothing but salty, free air, smiling and laughing into the wind, trying to turn around in midair to see the clouds ripping away from me. My laughter must have sounded insane. I must have looked insane. But freefalling with my dragon was one of my favorite things, and I was loving every second, not giving a thought to how I looked or sounded.

I hadn't realized how close I'd gotten to the ocean until I felt Toothless' strong body beneath me, trying to right me in the saddle. I twisted around, buckled myself in and patted his head. "Okay, I think, another round around the island and then we'll land?" I didn't want to get off his back. I wanted to stay here, drifting through the clouds with him forever. Because up here, I felt free.

But I knew I had to land, I had to get back home. As much as he would have liked it, too, he was heartily against me flying all night, insisting I get sleep or some such motherly nonsense.

He nodded happily at my words, leaning into my touch. I smiled, giving him a light scratch behind the ears.

"Hiccup!" There was a startled shout from far below and I instantly looked down, my eyes seeking the speaker. When I saw Stoick staring up at me, gray eyes wide in horror, my heart jumped into my mouth. \_Oh, no.\_

I was off Toothless before we had even landed, when we still hovered a foot off the ground. Yanking my prosthetic rather ungracefully out of the saddle, I came barreling over to Stoick, scared to death about what might be scaring him. "What's wrong? Stoick, what is it?" I asked breathlessly as he grabbed my shoulders.

His touch wasn't the comforting thing I had come to know; rather, it was suddenly forceful and angry, and I had a feeling he was going to leave red marks on my skin. I had never heard Stoick yell at me before, but when he bellowed, I could tell he wasn't happy. \_"What the hell were you thinking?! What the hell was that? What kind of idiot are you, you could have died!" \_

"Whatâ€¦what's wrong?" I demanded impatiently, brushing my windblown hair out of my eyes. "Stoick, will you please just tell me what it is?"

"\_What," \_he bellowed in an awful voice, \_"what in the Nine Realms

possessed you to jump out of the saddle?!" \_

"Oh! That!" And I was so relieved that nothing bad was happening, that it was just Stoick overreacting again, that I laughed a little hysterically.

"Do you mind telling me what's so funny?!" he blustered angrily, his grip like iron.

And my laughter instantly died away. I unconsciously flinched back, trying to work my arms free of his grip. "I justâ€¦I just thought something was seriously wrong, I'm sorryâ€¦" I shook slightly beneath his hard glare, expecting a swift smack across the face.

"Something \_is\_ seriously wrong!" He bellowed, outraged. "My son is a royal \_idiot\_!"

I felt my fists tighten and clench. "I'm not an idiot!"

"You \_jumped\_ out of the saddle\_ and you \_laughed\_ like it was a game\_!"

"I wasn't in any danger!"

"You could have died!"

"Are you seriously telling me Toothless wouldn't have caught me?!"

"You can't rely on your dragon to be there for you all the time!"

"I know that!" I yelled right back at him, blood pounding in my ears. "But what you're not getting is that when I know he's there, I can rely on him, because he always comes for me! You haven't been there, you haven't seen some of the things he's done for me! You can't understand what I mean!"

"I understand enough, Hiccup! I understand that you won't be jumping out of the saddle anymore!"

"Yes, I will!"

"Oh, no, you won't!"

"You can't stop me!"

"I can stop you from flying."

"No, you can't," I responded. "Don't even \_try\_ it."

"Is that a challenge?"

"See it however you want," I replied angrily. "But if you try and come between me and my dragon, I \_won't\_ listen to you."

"What if you don't have a choice?"

"Of course I do," I huffed.

"I'm your fatherâ€¦"

"Don't pull the 'father' trick on me," I wasn't sure if I was speaking through clenched teeth or not anymore. "Don't even try it. As far as I'm concerned, I had no father for sixteen years! You weren't even in my life for sixteen years, don't try to interfere now!"

Stoick actually drew back and fell completely silent, staring at me.

Even I was speechless with myself for a moment. Why had I just said that? What was I thinking? I couldn't make myself say anything more. For a moment, I stood there staring at him, and then I did what I always did when I was angry or upset or embarrassed. And in this case, I was all three.

I turned on my heel and I ran like the wind.

\* \* \*

><p>I should have run back to the house, right? Yeah. I should have.<p>

Nope. Stoick was right on the money about me being an idiot, so I headed for the forest instead. Even though it was nightfall, even though I didn't know this forest very well, even though I was tired and kind of cold and still upset and a little angry, I headed for the forest. Because what's life without reckless idiocy?

So I plunged into the dark trees, feeling as if Stoick's gaze was boring a hole in my back. And then I began to run, my prosthetic squeaking slightly in protest, feeling anger building in my chest. Now I had done it, now I had really done it. I had said something so bratty in the heat of the moment, like the stupid person I was, and Stoick was going to give up on me, like everyone had. Everyone except Toothless.

I threw the dragon a look as he crawled beside me, blinking his large green eyes. I got the feeling that he didn't one hundred percent understand what had gone on back there or why I was so angry, but he sensed that I regretted my words now and he was trying to make me feel better.

"Thanks, bud," I whispered, rubbing his nose gratefully. I looked around at the darkening forest and gave a little sigh. No, I didn't recognize where I was. Every single freaking tree looked exactly the same. How was I supposed to find my way out of here?

I wouldn't, I decided. I would settle down in the grass and, tomorrow, I would find my way back out and try to go from there. Find out how angry Stoick was with me and, depending if it was the beat-me-to-a-bloody-pulp kind of angry that Alvin used to be, then I'd either go away with Toothless orâ€¦

Well, it was a start. It was the beginnings of a plan, even if I wasn't sure whether it was too drastic to wait until he was ready to officially send me away or not. Because I was sure that it was clear to him now that I couldn't be fixed. I was hopeless, and he didn't want an idiot for a son.

I sighed, pushing a tree branch out of my way and turning to Toothless. "Alright, there, bud, we're gonna sleep here tonight andâ€"

BOOM.

My stomach clenched as I recognized the inevitable sound of thunder. I hated storms. Toothless crooned worriedly up at me when he spotted my expression, rubbing his head against my side.

"I'm okay." My hand was shaking when I touched him. "I'm okay, let's justâ€|find a place to sleep, okay?"

We picked a pretty sturdy tree to sleep under, and we found it just before the rain started, which was lucky. Toothless shielded me from the worst of the rain with his wings, nuzzling my hair with his nose and trying to distract me from the storm.

I leaned back against him, swallowing hard when lightning lit up the sky. I had never regarded what I'd had on Outcast Island as shelter, but, if I had been back in my cell, I think I would have thought myself lucky when I considered this alternative. But I had to be strong. I mean, Toothless was upset for me, I could tell, and I didn't want that. So I gently petted his nose and offered him a weak smile, settling down in the comforting shelter of his wings. I felt his throat vibrating softly as he nuzzled and licked me, trying to lull me into sleep. I stared up into the rain, feeling the cold drops sting my face. "Toothless," I whispered to my dragon in a low voice, "stop. I'm okay now."

He reluctantly ceased his make Hiccup smile campaign, crooning sadly.

"I'll be okay," I promised. "I am okay. I justâ€|I just want to sleep." I rolled over, away from him, before loud footsteps broke the silence.

"How many times?! How many times have I told you to be quiet?" Somebody from behind the bushes loudly whispered.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry!" Another voice added, slightly louder. "I'm trying!"

"You're so clumsy!"

"Shut up, all of you!" A third voice joined the procession.

I had been rising up on my elbows uncertainly, prepared to see who lurked behind the bushes, but at the third voice, I froze. I knew that voice.

The shrubbery rustled softly and Stoick the Vast stepped out, a lantern in his hand, squinting into the darkness. He rose the lantern slightly higher, letting the glow of the fire envelop everything in warm light.

I shuddered beneath the stinging cold rain, suddenly wishing very much that he wouldn't see me. What was he going to say when he did? Was he going to hit me? Was he going to beat me? Despite the fact that I was sixteen, I suddenly felt very small and scared when his



gray eyes found me.

"Hiccup! Thank Thor!" He dropped the lantern on the muddy ground and raced towards me, enveloping me in a hug. His arms were warmer than the cold, wet ground and for a moment I clung to him before fear and guilt seized me, making me push him away.

"I'm sorry," I whispered. "Iâ€¦I didn't mean it, I don't know what I was thinkingâ€¦I just sort of blurted it outâ€¦"

"It's okay," he interrupted softly, brushing my hair back from my face. "I'm just so glad you're alright." He offered me a small smile as he ran his fingers through my wet hair.

I felt suddenly shy and self-conscious standing in front of him like this, and I wanted to pull away. "Wait, you wereâ€¦you were searching for me?"

"Why wouldn't I?" he whispered. "I was going to let you be alone, but the hours just kept passing and the storm startedâ€¦I know how you don't like them and it got me worried."

I dropped my eyes to the ground as Snotlout and Fishlegs came stumbling into the clearing behind him, dripping wet.

"You found him?" Snotlout sounded relieved.

"Send up the flare to the others," Stoick nodded. "Let them know there's no need to continue searching."

How they managed to send up said flare in this rain, I had no idea, but they must have managed it, because they said no words of protest. Stoick just kept smoothing my hair back worriedly and whispering about what a miracle it was that he had found me, but I kept waiting for the inevitable. Where was the goodbye, the 'I'm giving up on you'? Because surely it had to be coming. Nobody wanted me, not when I said something that cruel.

But the only thing Stoick kept saying was that he was so happy to have found me, that he worried he wouldn't be able to.

"Why aren't you mad at me?" I whispered finally, fighting his hug, even though the outpouring of affection was honestly kind of nice. "I mean, the things I saidâ€¦I'm really sorry, Iâ€¦"

"You're fine, you're fine," he whispered, kissing my head and gently loosening his hold on me. "No, you're fine, I didn't care about that, Hiccupâ€¦Iâ€¦I didn't think you meant it," he added uncertainly. "I mean, the look on your face after you said itâ€¦but if you don't want me in yourâ€¦"

"No, I do!" I added as the rest of the search party came traipsing into view, holding lanterns and looking relieved. "I really do, I'm sorryâ€¦I'm so sorryâ€¦"

"You need to get home," he whispered. "Get changed into something dry, you're wet and you must be freezing. Are you hurt anywhere?" He began to inspect me for injuries, and I shook my head.

"My prosthetic was squeaking a bit," I admitted. "But, no, I'm

fineâ€|"

He looked at my leg, deemed to be suitable to go straight home without seeing the healer and dragged me up again, out of the forest. I kept replaying his beautiful words in my head, the way he'd known I hadn't really meant it, the way he wasn't giving me upâ€|it felt nice. The way he rubbed his hand along my back, helping me over tree roots and shielding me from the rain, wrapping me in his fur cloak to keep me warm, it all felt nice. And I realized how wrong I was when I yelled at him, not just because I was speaking in anger in the heat of the moment, and that he couldn't possibly have predicted I was alive, but also because I realized how much I did want him in my life. I needed him. I needed him and he was prepared to be there for me. He wasn't going to give up on meâ€|at least it didn't seem like it right now.

## 69. Thunderstorm Part VII

Untold

### Chapter 69 - Thunderstorm Part VII

Summary: Continuation of 'Thunderstorm'

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, so. Hiccup angst. I thinkkk this pushes me over 100k. Does it? Does it, does it, does it? Wow, thirteen whole reviews last chapter! Wait, you guys actually LIKED it? \*faints in shock\* wow. Wow. I didn't. I really didn't. But thank you guys for liking it!  
**\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I was up at the crack of dawn the next morning, intensely grateful that the sun had decided to come along when it had. Try as I might, I hadn't been able to stop the horrible thoughts plaguing me last night about why Thor would want me off the island, and why Toothless had woken me for the metal plates. I yawned, sat up in bed, kicked the covers off and rubbed at my eyes. I was so tired, I felt like I could have happily lain down and slept for a week straight.<p>

But Vikings didn't get tired, I told myself sternly, pushing myself up and reaching for my prosthetic, which had been squeaking a bit the night before from all the rain. I dearly hoped that maybe the storm would be over for good now, and maybe Thor didn't want me off the island after all, but a glance out my window told me that this was just wishful thinking. Lightning flashed bright blue and white in the dark gray sky, and a heavy canopy of clouds almost completely blocked out the rising sun. I put a hand on the sill as I tugged on my boot and vest with a sigh, turning to Toothless.

My dragon had taken a long time to settle down last night, too. He had kept staring avidly out the window at the downpour, and then back at me, as if thinking that the rain would surely help me connect the dots about the metal plates. It didn't.

I sighed as I remembered, thinking that I'd better get down there so I could ask Stoick why the metal plates were in his yard. But then, he'd probably ask me where I'd found the metal plates in the first

place, and how I'd found them, and how crazy would I sound if I told him Toothless had dug them up? And how had Toothless even known they were there in the first place?

My mind tried to churn out possibilities, but I didn't think very well on no sleep, and seeing as that's what I was running on today, I was not going to be bringing my A game anywhere. I rubbed my temples tiredly as I walked downstairs, stifling a yawn behind my hand and heading for the kitchen. Stoick wasn't awake yet, so I decided to just leave him be about the metal plates and rehearse asking him while I worked. I skipped breakfast, as food held no appeal to me at a time like this.

I walked right past Stoick's bedroom and out the door, Toothless following me the whole way there. He began to go towards the disturbed dirt where the plates were buried, but I think I looked too tired to deal with that right now, because he eventually walked beside me again.

"Toothless, I don't understand those metal plates," I murmured tiredly, brushing my hair out of my eyes; the rain was beginning to wet them down, plastering my hair to my forehead. "I wish you could just tell me."

He crooned sadly, clearly wishing the same thing.

I scratched him gently under the chin as we walked, trying to soothe him. However, when I got to the forge, I remembered yet another unwelcome thing about today: Astrid was supposed to be coming soon to get her axe sharpened. Not only would Gobber begin talking about "young love" once she left and the "I see the way you look at her" crud that I could really do without today, but I wasn't even sure what I was supposed to be explaining to her. Not for the first time, I wished Toothless could talk, so I didn't have to.

"What's wrong, laddie?" Gobber asked when I walked into the forge and began taking weapons from the pile. "You look exhausted."

"I didn't get much sleep last night," I mumbled, brushing my wet hair off my forehead.

"Can't imagine why." Gobber threw a dark look at the door of the forge.

"What's wrong?" I set my tools down, looking over at him.

Gobber looked very surprised. "It's unlike Mildew to change his mind once he's made it up, but maybe he did. He was planning toâ€|wellâ€|he was planning toâ€|visit your house tonight and kind ofâ€|force Stoick to change his mind about letting you stay here."

At his words, there seemed to be something very tight squeezing my heart, and I found I couldn't meet Gobber's eye. "Maybe things would be better if he had," I mumbled, remembering my pledge to leave the island if it didn't abate soon. I felt like assuring the people of Berk that I wouldn't be here much longer, but I knew Gobber would try to stop me. I didn't want him and the village to be punished just because of something I'd done.

"Hiccup, don't think like that," Gobber's voice was unexpectedly gentle, causing me to glance uncertainly up at him. "Don't you dare. Thor isn't mad at you, and everybody will know that soon. This storm is justâ€¦taking longer to fizzle out than the others haveâ€¦"

"Gobber, don't try to deny it." I shook my head, but the opening of the door interrupted our conversation. It was a man I didn't recognize standing in the doorway, his helmet slightly askew.

"That storm out there is bad," he gasped, gripping two halves of a broken spear tightly in one hand. "Just trying to get from me house to the forge is like running an obstacle course!"

Gobber noted the man's broken spear and jerked his head in my direction. "Hiccup, do you mind getting this one?"

"Sure." I shrugged, set my tools down and reached for the halved weapon, but the man wouldn't let me have it. He drew back with a sudden sneer, jerking his hands out of my reach.

"Oh, no, never mind. I'll go home and patch it myself. I'd rather die than have dirty Outcast scum fixing my weapons. I wondered why this place had gone downhill."

And, within seconds, the door was swinging shut behind him once again.

Gobber's tools landed on the wooden floor with a clunk, and he stared openmouthed after the man who had just left. "Well!" he cried into the thick, tense silence. "We don't need people like that in the forge anyway â€" the ceiling is too low for how high they can turn up their noses, right, laddie?"

But I wasn't in the mood for Gobber's jokes. I turned suddenly around, grabbing up my tools again with a white-knuckled grip, squeezing my eyes shut, telling myself I had heard worse, been through worse, been called worse, so much worse, so much worseâ€¦ I could still see the man's sneering, angry countenance, drawing away from me the moment I took a step towards him. As if he was trying his hardest not to be touched by me. As if touching me would somehow strip him of his purity.

And this, out of everything else, cemented my decision. Tonight, when everybody else lay sleeping in their beds, I would grant them the peace they deserved. I would flee Berk, the way Thor seemed to so badly want me to.

## 70. Thunderstorm Part VIII

Untold

Chapter 70 - Thunderstorm Part VIII

Summary: Continuation of 'Thunderstorm'.

**\*\*A/N: EVERYBODY READ THIS \*\***

**\*\*So, first off, I'm doing Camp Nano Wrimo. I know. I know it was**

stupid of me to sign up, but I did. If it helps, I'm only doing 30k this time, and it's a fanfiction, not a novel. I might even post said fanfiction when it's done :) It's called 'Holding On' and while it's not an AU, it's probably one of my favorite canon ideas ever. I had the idea before HTTYD2, and then that kinda sapped my love for it, and then I realized Camp is starting tomorrow. I'm really sorry, but updates will be less frequent. I hope you guys can understand.

\*\*

\*\*Secondly, I'm not really that sure about this chapter. One of my readers suggested that I just ask you guys what you think next time I don't like it, and that's what I'm doing. I shall try my hardest not to put myself down. I really should have updated Overachiever before Camp started, but I got all these reviews asking if Hiccup was gay ;-; He's not, BTW. Not in anything I write, probably. I can't see Hiccup having a different sexuality than his canon self, no matter how far my AU Hiccups stray. Okay, really long AN is ending now! I'm hungry. I want something to eat. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Astrid came traipsing into the forge, of course, swinging her slightly dulled axe as she did so. Gobber must have sensed that I wasn't in the mood for his jokes, although he did wiggle his eyebrows a bit suggestively when she specifically asked for me to sharpen her axe.<p>

I rolled my eyes at him, took the weapon, and held it against the grindstone, watching the sparks fly.

"Soâ€|" she began in a slightly lowered voice, wiping her bangs out of her face. I could hardly hear her over the screech of metal on stone, and I leaned forward slightly so I could. "What was all that stuff about last night about?"

"I honestly have no idea," I replied, and at her suspicious look, I told her the full story.

The silence that followed was broken by a clap of thunder that made me jump, mumble a swear, and scrape my knuckles, hard, against the grindstone. The scraped skin bled a bit, and the axe went tumbling out of my hands, but Astrid ignored the weapon as it tumbled to the ground. "Are you alright?" She asked, her eyes locking on my hand as she made to look at my knuckles.

I swiped the blood off my skin absently as Gobber came over concernedly. "That looks painful, lad," he commented softly, taking my palm gently.

"It's okay," I mumbled, bending down to pick up Astrid's axe with my other hand. I could tell she was a bit confused as to why I'd been so jumpy, but I didn't bother explaining. She had no idea that I was afraid of storms, and I had no intentions to enlighten her.

She inspected her axe minutely, but she kept looking up at me from under her bangs. I hoped its fall with the wooden floor hadn't chipped the blade. "So, let me get this straight," she said as Gobber fussed a bit and insisted that we should probably put ointment on the scrape. He was almost as bad as Stoick in the overprotective aspect. Almost, but not quite. He led me back over to my desk, pulled out a

chair and began to clean my knuckles as Astrid stared at me, raising an eyebrow.

"Toothless woke you up in the middle of the night to show you a couple metal plates buried in the ground?" She asked, sounding disbelieving. I wondered if it was me she didn't believe. The story did sound kind of ludicrous.

"Metal plates?" Gobber demanded, rubbing a rag over my hand and glancing up at me as he spoke. "What about the metal plates?"

So then I had to go through the whole story all over again and this time, Astrid looked a bit less skeptical.

"I think Toothless thinks that the metal plates are really important," I finished, "but I just don't see it. He was going crazy about them last nightâ€|"

Gobber looked thoughtful, pursing his lips. "Metal platesâ€|?" he murmured to himself, absently sticking a bandage on my knuckles. "What would metal plates be doing buried in the dirt on Berk?"

I ran my fingers through my hair and shrugged. "Your guess is as good as mine."

Toothless kept staring hopefully up at us, as if thinking three heads were better than one, and that three people thinking would surely crack the case.

"I'm sorry, bud," I murmured, reaching down and petting his nose. "We really don't have any idea what you mean."

The thunder boomed loudly again, and I shuddered a little as I glanced out at the black sky. I really hoped this storm would end, and soon. I felt Gobber putting a hand on my shoulder, patting me reassuringly. "You're alright, laddie."

"I know," I responded, trying to shrug off his soothing hand.

Astrid kept staring down into the metal axe, as if thinking it held all the answers.

"Astrid, c'mon!" A voice from outside the forge had the three of us turning to look; Ruffnut was standing there, looking annoyed. "What happened to you beating Snotlout today to shut him up for good?"

"I don't know if this is the best time," Astrid admitted, letting herself out of the forge and lingering on the step. "I feel like we should be thinking of a way to stop this storm, not be playing games."

I lingered by the back door with her, watching as she dithered. "There's a great way to get these storms to stop," I muttered, sitting down on the wooden steps. "Throw me off the island."

She sent me a sharp look. "You can't believe everything they've been saying about you, do you?"

"Well, think about it," I mumbled, feeling suddenly uncomfortable under her gaze. "You never had a storm like this until I

arrived."

"Wrong," Astrid replied, sounding a bit smug. "Jorgen Barnstadtâ€"

"Yeah, I've heard all about that," I interrupted, waving a hand dismissively. "What I mean is, that was the last time you guys had a really bad storm like this one, that continued on during the daylight hours, and both of these storms have been caused by a new arrival." I cocked an eyebrow. "Sound familiar?"

She crossed her arms. "If Thor really sent this storm to wash you off the island, why didn't he do that six months ago, when you first showed up here?"

I sighed, rubbing tired fingers along my temples as a pounding headache began. "Search me," I responded. "Maybeâ€|maybe Thor knows that it's best if Iâ€|if I don't ever belong anywhere, if I just keep runningâ€|" I added this last part very softly, staring down at my knees.

Ruffnut came around the side of the forge, looking for Astrid, and Gobber emerged from the building, but even these two weren't enough to stop a girl like Astrid once she got started. For a second, all she did was stare at me in silence. And thenâ€| "Are you a freaking idiot?"

"Yes," I told her.

"No, really," she persisted angrily. "How much of an idiot are you? Do you know what you sound like right now? You sound \_stupid\_. You sound freaking \_stupid\_. Thor isn't trying to wash you off the island, because if he really hadn't wanted you on Berk, he would have done that in the first place!"

"But he wouldn't have known that I'd find what I did here!" I was still so hesitant about calling Stoick my father, and Berk my home. I wasn't sure if I was allowed to call it that yet. "Maybe he thought I wouldn't settle here, because my original intent was to get away as fast as I could!"

"Thor is not trying to wash you off the island!" Gobber countered, eyes blazing suddenly with a burning anger. "And damn Mildew for making you think he is! You belong here, and nothing is going to change that!"

"It'd be better for everyone if I left!"

For a second, they all just kind of stared at me. Astrid unfroze herself first, and she seemed to be forcing words through very white lips. "You're not really leaving, are you?"

The next denial came much quicker than the first. "Hiccup, don't think like that!" Gobber insisted.

"Why shouldn't I?" I demanded, turning on him. "I mean, if Thor wants to punish me, he should punish me and me alone! It's only fair!"

"Will you stop being such a noble idiot?" Astrid folded her arms over

her chest, keeping her axe tightly in her hands, as if telling me that she wasn't afraid to use it.

"Nobody should have to deal with this but me," I turned around, heading back inside the forge. "Everybody's got enough on their plates without having to deal with me, especially Stoick, and he's really taking the impact of all this."

I was halfway back to my worktable when Gobber called after me. "You're being selfish, you know!"

I turned suddenly to look at him, almost relieved to find Astrid and Ruffnut had peeled away, obviously deciding there was no reasoning with me. "Selfish?" I sputtered. "How am I being selfish? I'm only trying to protectâ€"

"Yes, but aren't you thinking of Stoick?"

"Of course I am!" I fumed.

"Then you'd know how much your absence would crush him," Gobber's scowl was almost scary. I had never seen him this angry at anyone, especially not me. "Before he had you, Hiccup, he was a good chieftain. He protected his people, he led them well, and he had a comfortable life, but he wasn't happy. You've brought so much life to him these past few months, and it'd be a damn shame to watch all of that just go away again once you're gone. So if you won't stay for you, and if you won't stay because you know Mildew's wrong, then stay for him. Please."

## 71. Thunderstorm Part IX

Untold

### Chapter 71 - Thunderstorm Part IX

Summary: Continuation of 'Thunderstorm'.

\*\*A/N: Yeah, I know. I should be working on Camp. Shush. I lost inspiration, but I'll be trying to hit 6k today. I am currently at 4k.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Normally, Toothless and I went for a night flight around the island when it got dark, but todayâ€|<p>

I glanced up at the forks of lightning illuminating the sky and shuddered. Today, I didn't think I could handle being that close to the storm.

Toothless kept gazing up at me sadly, as if he guessed the dark train of my thoughts. He nudged my palm with his nose, licking my fingers, trying to make me smile. I did offer him one, mostly to get him to stop worrying, and I scratched him behind the ears for a couple seconds before I felt something hard and painful collide with my shoulder.

I fell to the ground and put my hands down to steady myself, looking



around for the cause of the commotion.

"Sorry!" Snotlout gasped, pushing his Viking helmet, which was slightly askew, farther up his head. He was wearing a wide grin, however, and didn't seem at all perturbed or injured. On the contrary, he jumped to his feet, grabbed my hand and pulled me up while crying, "C'mon, Hiccup, c'mon!"

"What's going on?" I asked, trying to yank my arm free of his grip, once again overestimating my own meager strength. "Where are you taking me? Snotlout, I'm really not in the moodâ€"

"No, you gotta come see this!" he exclaimed, not even once looking back at me, but continuing to drag me along. "I really think you'll like it, Hiccup!"

Whatever he wanted to show me, he clearly wouldn't rest until he had, so I gave up and let him drag me along, over to a house I didn't recognize, perched crookedly on a tiny hill. I could see something huge standing in the backyard, but I didn't get a good look because of how fast Snotlout was going.

"Snotlout, wait!" I tried to call. "Where are you taking me?"

"We're just going up to Fishlegs' house, it's fine," he allowed me to use my feet again when we arrived at the edge of the yard. "See? See?" He ran up, pointing to the large thing in the yard. It was a statue of some sort, a man carved into the metal. He held up one mighty, block hand, and in the other, he held a hammer. There was a winged Viking helmet on his head, and he stared straight ahead above us impassively.

"Isn't it amazing?" A glowing Astrid came up to us, and, tearing my eyes away from the impressive artwork, I saw the other teens all gathered in a cluster around me.

"Isâ€|is that supposed to be Thor?" I asked, pointing up to the statue, recalling the hammer and his confident stature.

Astrid nodded, her blue eyes sparkling. "It was Snotlout's idea, it really was! We said we should do something to appease Thor, to show everyone it's not you causing these storms, that he's angry with us for a completely different reason!"

She was speaking so fast and seemed so delighted that I was having trouble catching all the words; my head was spinning just from trying to listen. "Wait, what?"

Snotlout repeated the story to me, noticeably slowing himself down when he got too excited, and it was during the second telling that it began to hit me: \_they had made this statue to convince me to stay\_. To show people that I wasn't causing these storms, that Thor wasn't angry with me.

And, this is the really stupid thing: it made me feel like crying. It made me happy, but it also made me feel like crying, something Vikings don't do, and then, oddly enough, it made me feel like hugging them, which is definitely something Vikings don't do and something I don't particularly enjoy anyway.

But I didn't hug them, because that would have been awkward, and I didn't cry, because I brushed impatiently at the tears, looking to the statue, the metal glinting in the sun. I looked back at the teens, all gathered around me in a semi-circle, and I smiled, my heart squeezing suddenly for them. "Thank you," I whispered.

Snotlout's nervous, expectant expression broke suddenly into a wide grin and he leaned over, ruffling my hair. "You're welcome, cousin." I had never really liked people touching me, especially not my head, but I let him do it, just this once.

Astrid smiled, Fishlegs was looking at me as if wondering whether he should explain how the statue was made and what kind of metals they used. Ruffnut and Tuffnut were punching each other already, but Tuffnut looked up long enough to say, "I did the most work on it!" making Ruffnut roll her eyes.

"He did do a lot," Snotlout confessed.

"But it wasn't a competition," Astrid added hastily before Ruffnut could start something.

"I can't believe you just said that," Snotlout countered, making Astrid ball her hand into a fist.

The statue and the meaning behind it was quickly forgotten by them, but I didn't forget it. I had never smiled so much that my face hurt afterwards, but I did then as I watched them argue and punch each other and issue empty threats.

Fishlegs' mother came out into the backyard after a bit and invited us inside for a break from working, because apparently, they hadn't stopped to let her know they were done. I was about to decline when Snotlout took the decision out of my hands, as I suspected he liked to do. He grabbed my upper arm again and dragged me inside after the others, where Mrs. Ingerman served us drinks and gave us crabcakes, taking a few for herself as well.

As we all sat around the long kitchen table, she leaned over and put a hand on mine. "Hiccup, isn't it?"

I nodded uncertainly, feeling sure that she was about to go wash her hands after touching me, yelling about how I was a curse upon the island and I was making Thor angry with them.

She sighed, her mouth drawing down at the corners. "I want you to know that I don't think you're causing these storms."

It was so unexpected that I dropped my crabcake on the table and didn't even bother picking it up. "Ohâ€¦uhâ€¦th-thank you."

"The only reason it seems like everybody's doing it is because the people who do blame you are few, but they're louder than the people who don't," she continued quietly, and I realized the others were kind of staring at us. I stared down at my lap, feeling a blush heat up my cheeks, but I wasn't ashamed: I was grateful, in fact.

Here was somebody who I had never spoken to, somebody whose name I only half-knew. I may have helped her with dragon trouble once or

twice, and she had faith in me. She believed that I wasn't causing these storms.

"You're a good boy," she whispered, before Tuffnut caught her attention by walloping his sister a good one.

"Can you two stop that?" she snapped. "Your mother asked me to keep you two from fighting if I was going to be hereâ€|"

As I began to lose interest in conversation, I watched as the others ate, drank, talked and joked, their laughter carefree, their smiles steady and not shaky. It was going to be so hard to leave them, I thought, with another painful squeeze.

And that's when I made a deal with myself: maybe I was causing these storms and maybe I wasn't. Only one way to find out. I looked up at the statue again, staring through the window.

## 72. Paper Cut

Untold

Chapter 72 - Paper Cut

Summary: Hiccup hates the sight of blood.

**\*\*A/N:** I hit 10k on Camp Nano, so I granted myself a break :D and this originally started out as an angsty idea and then I decided to turn it kind of humorous, I guess? I don't really know how people feel when they see blood and it makes them sick, because it doesn't make me sick. Although I do recall one time, the nurse who was drawing blood kept asking me, "Are you sure this won't make you pass out?" I was like noooo xD **\*\***

**\*\*No offense to the people who do pass out at it, though. \*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I didn't like the sight of blood.<p>

I hated it, in fact. Years with Alvin the Treacherous, years with blood-soaked bandages and broken fingers wrapped in splints and all sorts of horrible things had led to me having quite the weak stomach when it came to physical injury. And blood was my least favorite.

I shuddered at bruises. I winced at scars. But Iâ€|I hated blood.

Nobody on Berk had figured out why I did, of course. Not even Stoick knew how much I hated it.

But I had a funny feeling that they would find out soon. The world began to blur around me as I stared at the scarlet liquid dripping from my fingers and I fell onto the ground, shaking.

Stoick and Gobber came out of their conversation long enough to look over at me. I was ready to vomit by now, but I couldn't really see and I definitely couldn't sit up far enough to expel any content.

"Hiccup?" Stoick thumped me on the back and my hands went instantly to my stomach before I dropped to the ground again.

The chief sprang back and let out a cry as Gobber knelt over me.

"I don't believe it â€" he's fainted!"

The teasing was terrible for that one.

### 73. Making Use of Memories

Untold

#### Chapter 73 - Making Use of Memories

Summary: Stoick decides to do a little spring cleaning. But memories can crop up in the strangest of ways.

**\*\*A/N:** Well, this was sorta inspired by my friend, whose parents put off spring cleaning for awhile xD I was like yeahhh I imagine Stoick would be the type to just blow it off xD Also, I had to do something angsty, and this was just the thing :) And secondly...\*\*

**\*\*OH MY GOSH SIX HUNDRED REVIEWS OH MY GOSH COME HERE ALL OF YOU LET ME LOVE YOU ALL MY GOSH SIX HUNDRED REVIEWS MY GOSH WASN'T IT LIKE YESTERDAY THAT I HIT 500 MY GOSH\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I never even knew Stoick had a closet before today. I had never really ventured that far into his bedroom. I had lived in this house for almost five months already, and I had never gone into places that I wasn't sure I was allowed to go. But today, when Stoick had opened the wooden door on the other side of the landing, opposite from the door of the bedroom, and announced that he <em>had<em> to get on with his spring cleaning, I realized just how much I had missed in my hesitation.

There was one whole shelf devoted to the little wooden knick-knacks he seemed to love carving, and then there was a shelf piled up with weapons and armor that wasn't right for Stoick. It was a shock to see that shelf, to realize that generations of people had lived here before him. I wondered what his first night alone in this house must have been like.

The shelf that caught my eye was, of course, the shelf lined with books. Hardcover, paperback, green or red or blue or purple, the colors and sizes and styles didn't matter. I was instantly drawn to them. I ran a finger longingly down the spines, wondering what kinds of worlds these books held when a voice from behind me made me jump.

"What are you looking at?"

I turned around quickly, surprised that I didn't feel my hands curling into fists. "Justâ€|just the books," I stammered, one hand still on the spines.

"Oh." Stoick set the wooden crate he had been carrying down on the floor and picked up a few knick-knacks off the shelf, dropping them into the box. "You like to read?"

I nodded wordlessly, reluctantly taking my hands off the books and helping him clear away the wooden figurines.

"Well, any time you want to read those books, they're there," he offered me a small smile, and I gave him a hesitant one in return, before something in the corner caught my eye.

It was a very dark corner of the closet, unused and dusty. There was the outline of a wooden crate against the dark cloth that had hastily been thrown over it. "What's in here?" I wondered aloud, edging closer to it and picking up the cloth. A few dead insects rolled out, along with a lot of dust bunnies and I sneezed softly.

"Hiccup." Stoick's smile vanished and he was suddenly beside me, reaching out a hand to stop me from looking into the wooden crate.

"What's in that?" I pulled away and his eyes softened. He slowly let his arm drop, tugging it out of the corner. More dust flew off the top and I swiped at watering eyes.

"Iâ€¦I guess it's your right to see what's in here," he began gently, setting it down in front of me. "Do you want to?"

My natural curiosity urged me to say yes, but he was also kind of scaring me. "Umâ€¦I don't knowâ€¦do I?"

He hesitated, and then shrugged his shoulders. "I'm not sure. I'm hoping thatâ€¦that I'll be able to look in here againâ€¦one day."

His vague response was both frustrating and, again, scary. "The stuff inside doesn't have eight or more legs, does it?"

His sorrowful expression twitched for a second, a glint of mirth entering his eyes. "No."

"Good, I hate spiders," I responded. "So, what is in there, then?" I decided that I was more curious than scared, and sat down cross-legged as he knelt down and began to pry open the top carefully.

Another few dust clouds later, I wiped at my bright red nose and looked down into the crate. There was a jumbled pile of armor in there, wrist guards, a tiny knife, and a slightly larger child's axe.

Stoick's eyes were sad again as he looked down too.

"What is all this?" I mumbled, pushing away the armor and finding a small brown blanket and a stuffed dragon, stained and colorless from age and dust. The stuffing was coming out of one ear, I noted when I carefully pulled it out.

"Thatâ€¦" Stoick's voice trembled and he cleared his throat. "Those wereâ€¦this wasâ€¦" He slowly took the stuffed dragon from me,

cradling it carefully. "This wasâ€¦something Val made for youâ€¦before you were born. She thought you might want...a stuffed toy to sleep withâ€¦when you were younger. You'reâ€¦I mean, you're too old for it now, of course, butâ€¦"

I nodded, suddenly understanding his sadness. I drew out the blanket instead, and this time, I had a better guess as to what it was. "A baby blanket?"

Stoick nodded wordlessly, his face a mask of grief.

It felt kind of funny that here was somebody, sitting beside me now, who had waited for me. The excitement was clear in these gentle but strong stitches; the stitches had to be strong, or this blanket would have crumbled to dust long ago. Somebody had genuinely wanted me, genuinely cared about me before they even knew me. They didn't know that I was going to be a disappointment to them, they didn't know I was going to be born a hiccup. All they knew was that they were going to have a child, and they had clearly been completely ecstatic about it.

I was hit with an odd sense of loss as I ran my fingers over the thick, dusty fabric. Just thinking about what I had lost upset me too much. If Alvin hadn't taken me away, this baby blanket wouldn't have gone unused. It wouldn't have been thrown hastily into a wooden crate and grown dusty and uncared for in a dark, damp corner of an old closet. It would have been taken out and used every day, if it weren't for Alvin. The thought upset me more than I wanted to admit.

To take my mind off of it, I looked back down into the crate, spotting the armor and the small weapons. I picked it up, setting it down in my lap, running my fingers over the wrist guards. "Was thisâ€¦was this armor for me?"

Stoick didn't answer right away, but when I looked at him, I saw he had tears in his eyes, and he was nodding. "It was meant to be given to you the day you became a man." His voice was shaking, as if he was about to dissolve into sobs. I hoped he wasn't. I couldn't see Stoick crying, and was terrified by the very thought. What did one do when a man as tough and Vikingly as Stoick the Vast laid down his sword and shield and wept?

I could see that the armor would have been huge on me. The sleeves would have bunched up at the shoulders, and the chainmail would have hung right off. But I couldn't help gazing down at it, feeling a perverse longing for it to be mine. Because although it had been made for me, it didn't feel like mine. It felt like I was stepping into another role, taking things that didn't belong to me. And one day, soon, would I have to give them back? The thought scared me, and I let the armor slide out of my grip, instead picking up the axe and the knife.

"We intended to teach you how to fight." Stoick's voice constricted unexpectedly, and when I glanced over, he was crying. He wasn't sobbing uncontrollably or burying his head in his hands, the way grief-stricken people sometimes do. He was just weeping silently with tears streaming calmly down his face, but he looked as if he had seen a thousand years of pure sorrow and anguish. "When you were old enough to understand what knives and axes could do, we intended to

teach you, butâ€|"

I nodded, letting the weapons fall out of my hands. At the bottom of the crate was a scattering of baby clothing, all in a dusty and jumbled heap. I picked up garment after garment, never failing to marvel at the fact that these were people who had wanted me. Who had anticipated my arrival. I couldn't imagine anyone being excited about a painfully ordinary person such as myself.

Stoick watched me for a long moment as I fingered the baby clothes and boots and then he rested a hand on my good knee and whispered, "What's going through your mind?"

I looked up at him for a second, my tongue stumbling over my thoughts. "I just can't believe you \_waited\_ for me."

Confusion knitted his brow. "What do youâ€?"

"I mean, I just can't believe that youâ€|you were so happy before I was even born!"

"Of course I was," he squeezed my knee gently. "You're my child, and I was ecstatic to see you, to get to know you."

"Butâ€|I justâ€|I meanâ€|" I couldn't put my thoughts into words, and Stoick's face slowly drifted back into that mask of sorrow. He reached over and tugged the clothing out of my hands.

He moved to lower it back in the crate before stopping and turning to me. "These are all your things. I know that most of them are things you've outgrown, but would youâ€|do you want them? Do you want me to keep them out?"

I wasn't sure what response he wanted me to give. For the life of me, I just couldn't figure out what he wanted to say. "Iâ€|umâ€|yes."

This must have been the answer he was hoping for, because, although the tears didn't vanish, his sorrowful expression softened into a serene smile. He closed the crate, leaving everything scattered in a heap on the floor. "I think we can still find uses for some of these things," he murmured, picking up the armor. "I mean, this might take a few modificationsâ€|"

"I think the words you're searching for are 'definitely a ton of modifications'," I corrected him, and he smiled a little.

"Hey, look," I added, picking up the axe, "a weapon I can actually lift."

His smile grew then, grew into a soft laugh and he stood, ruffling my hair and pulling me to my feet. "Yes, I think we can make use of these things."

\* \* \*

><p>I never asked how the stuffed dragon or the baby blanket wound up on my bed, and Stoick never explained. I just blindly accepted it, the way I had learned it was sometimes better to do. The first few nights, I ignored the two new additions, kicking them to the bottom

of the bed, but over time, I began to leave them up near my head and then, without even being warned, I had begun to hold the dragon every night. I had never had a stuffed animal before and the fact that I had one now was both really nice and really weird. But then again, wasn't everything on Berk?<p>

Yes, I thought as I ran my fingers lightly over the dragon's dusty cloth scales. We could make use of some of these things.

#### 74. Be Careful What You Wish For Part 1

Untold

#### Chapter 74 - Be Careful What You Wish For Part 1

Summary: Stoick makes a dangerous wish. But he can't bring himself to fully regret it. It's okay - Hiccup regrets it enough for both of them.

**\*\*A/N:** This is a new arc. This is to mend the feels that I think Unbreakable is going to mangle. If all goes according to plan, I am hoping to reduce you all to tears with that story at one point :D so, some fluff to help xD\*\*

**\*\*Also,** I know that there's a story with a similar plotline - 'Hiccup's Second Childhood' I think? - I even read parts of it, and I think maybe the part of me that got this idea was inspired by that, but I had the idea before then, too, because I run the ask blog for this AU and some magic anon - my friend, actually - did this xD \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Looking back, I think a part of me was glad. I was glad that it had happened, even though there were times when I wasn't so glad. Times when I was more like wishing I had never even thought of it in the first place. But you know what they say "be careful what you wish for.<p>

And did I ever learn that lesson well.

It was a cold winter's night, just Hiccup and I huddled around the fire, reading quietly by the orange glow, the only sound the crackling and turning of pages. It was very late, and Hiccup was all but nodding off after a bit. His head was bent far over his book, and his eyelids fluttered sleepily.

I reached out, gently taking the book from his hands and brushing his hair back from his forehead with a small smile.

He woke with a start, his green eyes wide as he looked curiously about himself. As he always did after just waking up, he looked very small and young, no older than ten as he yawned, rubbing at his eyes.

"You should get upstairs, Sleeping Beauty," I whispered teasingly.

He blinked, smiling in a tired sort of way. It only seemed to highlight the lines around his eyes, places where he had not smiled



for a very long time. "I'm going," he mumbled reluctantly, hauling himself up and stumbling over to the stairs. "G'night, Stoick."

"Good night, son," I called after him as he disappeared into his bedroom. I smiled as his door slammed shut, picked up our books and left them in my room as I swung my thick cloak off and hung it on its hook for the night.

I had gotten used to shutting out sorrowful thoughts, but for some reason, Hiccup's tired face swam into view again as I closed my eyes. How young and innocent he looked whenever I woke him. I would never see that innocence again; it had been stripped away from him at much too young an age. Now was the only time I would ever see him as he had once been, in those brief, beautiful moments between dreams and reality, as he slowly blinked himself into consciousness.

The thought saddened me. I sat down on my bed, looking out my window at the moon and the stars and sighed. "I'm grateful," I whispered. Even if the gods weren't listening, I felt like talking. "I'm so grateful to have my son back, butâ€¦I just wish that I could have known him as he once was. When he was a childâ€¦"

\* \* \*

><p>A scream awoke me. A rather high-pitched one, one you might hear from a very small child.<p>

I sat bolt upright in bed, looking around for the commotion. I thought about Hiccup and was halfway out of bed when I noticed the little boy crouched against the wall, looking terrified.

The kids on Berk were forever breaking and entering on dares these days. No respect.

"Whoâ€¦" I drew in a sharp breath when the boy caught my eye; he had the same striking emerald green gaze as Hiccup and Val. Did Hiccup have an unknown sibling, perhaps? I wondered as I studied the child. He could easily have been Hiccup's little brother.

\_Exactly how many more kids am I going to have? \_I thought to myself as I poked my head out of my bedroom door and called up the stairs, "Um, Hiccup?"

When there was no answer, I began to get nervous. "C'mon," I turned to the tiny Viking. "Let's go check on Hiccup."

He looked utterly terrified. "How do you know my name?"

"Yourâ€¦name?" I asked stupidly, unable to really comprehend it.

To my shock, surprise and utter horror, the boy burst into tears. "I want to go home!" he sobbed. "I want my daddy! I miss my daddy!"

"Whoa, whoa, where is your home?" I demanded, kneeling down next to him and taking his tiny hand to calm him. I gave it a reassuring squeeze. "And who's your dad?"

"Outcast Island," he sniffed and wiped at his eyes, which were so huge that they easily made up for the rest of his small features. Close up, I could see the little boy had freckles in spots that Hiccup did. "And my daddy is Alvin the Treacherous."

"Wait." A horrible feeling overcame me the moment I heard Alvin's name. "Who did you say you were again?"

"Hiccup," he sniffled nervously. "Hiccup the Treacherous."

\_Odin, have mercy on my soul. \_

## 75. Be Careful What You Wish For Part 2

Untold

### Chapter 75 - Be Careful What You Wish For Part 2

Summary: Continuation of Be Careful What You Wish For.

\*\*A/N: Okay, so next chapter is up! Sorry I'm not writing on Unbreakable...I kinda need some time to figure out how I want what's going to happen to happen...yeah...but fluff! And a bit of angst at the end... \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Stoick, calm down!"<p>

"C-calm down?! Myâ€|my sonâ€|is \_five\_! My son \_is five years old\_! AGAIN!"

"I'm sure there's an explanation," Gobber soothed. "We'll find it."

I looked down at the floor upon hearing the little boy giggle; for somebody who had been raised to hate dragons, it was like love at first sight for him and Toothless. I could only assume his teachings of dragons were given to him at an older age.

Toothless nuzzled Hiccup's hair with his nose, and the boy giggled again, looking up at the dragon adoringly.

"You have to admit, he is really cute," Gobber said grudgingly.

I glared at him. "That is the least of our problems! What we need to worry about now isâ€|isâ€|"

Gobber raised an eyebrow.

"Don't look at me like that! He's five years old, and even at sixteen, he barely has the sense that Odin gave a Gronckle! He's going to be even more trouble now!"

"Question is, how did this even happen?" Gobber's lips were twitching in ill-disguised amusement. "Was he acting strange last night?"

"No stranger than normal. I mean, you know howâ€|oddâ€|he canâ€|Odin. I am so stupid."

"What's wrong?" Gobber demanded urgently, all traces of laughter vanishing from his face. "Stoick? What is it?"

I rubbed my hand along my forehead, blowing out a long breath. "I askedâ€¦I mean, last night, I saidâ€¦I said that I wished I could have known Hiccup as a child."

"Stoickâ€¦"

"I know, I know. Stop looking at me like that! I've heard all those tales about wishes coming true when you make them on the night of the full moon, I just didn't really expect it to happen! I was just thinking it out loud, I didn't mean for it to be granted!"

"Then why on earth did you say it out loud, last night?" Gobber demanded, looking peeved. "For Thor's sake, Stoick, the kid'sâ€¦look at him, I meanâ€¦"oh!"

He had flung out an arm to indicate the boy on the floor, but there was no sign of him anywhere.

"Where did he go off to now?!" I felt pretty much ready to tear my beard out by that point, but I resisted.

"He's got such stick legs!" Gobber yelled, already racing for the door. "How can he move so fast?!"

To make it worse, he had taken Toothless with him, wherever he'd gone, so we couldn't even rely on the Night Fury's tracking skills to help us. And boy, did we ever need them. I couldn't comprehend how a tiny little five-year-old kid had managed to escape us, but he was nowhere to be found. I asked around the village, but nobody had seen him, and they all gave me strange looks, even when Gobber tried to explain about me making a wish on the full moon.

Finally, the boy came bouncing out of the woods and both Gobber and I rushed him, practically crying in relief.

"What's wrong?" he tilted his head questioningly at us.

"Where in Odin's name were you?" I demanded, putting a hand under his chin and cupping his tiny cheek. I used to think Hiccup was the smallest Viking I had ever seen, and I wasn't wrong; but his child self was so much smaller. I was incredibly nervous, finding myself much gentler than I normally was when I touched him, for fear of breaking one of his tiny bones.

"I had to go to the bathroom," he responded simply, as Toothless crept out of the woods behind him and shook his head at us in amusement. I could tell that the dragon had known we had been looking all over for him, and was taking the chance to reprimand us now for not keeping an eye on him.

"I didn't think you'd mind," Hiccup continued guiltily. "Why do you?"

"Iâ€¦well, because we couldn't find you! We weren't sure where you'd gone!"

"Well, I'm here now," he responded, but he sounded confused, and his brows were drawn together. "Why were you looking for me?"

"Wellâ€¦becauseâ€¦because we didn't want to lose you." It felt odd to explain the concept to him, and this answer only seemed to confuse him more, before a tiny bit of hope entered his eyes.

"Really? You really, really didn't want to lose me?"

"Ofâ€¦of course notâ€¦" I replied, a little surprised. "Whyâ€¦well, why do you ask?"

His face darkened. "People are always telling me to go get lost, and not ever, ever come back. Halfdan tells me I'd be doing the village a favor if I got lost in the woods and got eaten by a dragon. My daddy tells me to find a cliff and jump off of it." He sighed out those last few words.

There was a long silence.

"WHAT?!" I thundered, feeling a bit as if my world were spinning on its axis.

Hiccup flinched back from me when I yelled, and Gobber picked the boy up instead, glaring at me. "If you need a moment, go into the woods," he mouthed at me. "You're scaring him."

Right. The woods. Right.

Toothless was watching the exchange in interest, but he didn't seem as shocked as Gobber, nor as angry as I was. The fact that he'd known about Hiccup's horrible treatment in the village all along, and never thought to enlighten me as best as he could kind of stung, even though I knew that was stupid. I stomped away from the three of them, and I heard Hiccup's small voice behind me.

"Is he going to be okay?"

"Yes, yes, he's going to be fine."

"What's wrong with him?"

"He's got a Viking temper on him, that's what's wrong with himâ€¦"

## 76. The Talk

Untold

Chapter 76 - The Talk

Summary: There are a few things that Alvin neglected to tell Hiccup. Unfortunately, this duty now falls to Stoick.

\*\*A/N: Okay, so. I'm sorry if this offends anyone who doesn't expect it, but I think the chapter title is a pretty big warning. And I know I don't mention anything, but I'm still sorry if I offended you.

\*\*

**\*\*Also, just. Hiccup. His innocence. It warms my heart xD I can just see this happening xD \*\***

**\* \* \***

><p>"Hey, Stoick?"<p>

Oh, how innocently it started out. If I had known what I was getting into, I would never, ever have brought up the subject.

"Yeah?" He looked up momentarily from his book, setting it aside and looking quizzically at me.

"Can you explain something to me?"

Stoick raised an eyebrow. "Well, I don't know everything, so make sure you speak in English. When you start using the huge words I don't know, you've just lost me."

"Conflagration is not a huge word," I responded, rolling my eyes. "No, I've just never understood it, becauseâ€|wellâ€|how doesâ€|how does a woman have a child?"

Stoick blinked.

There was an awkward silence.

"What?" He finally squeaked. By the light of the fire, I thought he had gone bright red, but I couldn't tell.

His reaction suddenly made me feel embarrassed that I'd even asked. "Like, how does she have a child? I know, physically, how she has a baby, but the thing I've never understood is the father. I mean, I was told that a stork delivered me, but I know that didn't happen, and the best conclusion I've been able to come up with is that they somehow give a woman a child by a kiss?" I looked hopefully up at Stoick.

He wasn't even staring at me in shock any longer; he had his head in his hands and was moaning something about \_Oh, Thor, help me, you never told me that Hiccup didn't knowâ€|Odin, don't let me destroy his innocenceâ€|\_

"Is itâ€|not a kiss, then?" I asked timidly.

He raised a bright red face from his hands, adjusted his Viking helmet with an air of determination, and said, "Alright. I guess you need to know these things."

"\_Is\_ it a stork?"

## 77. Be Careful What You Wish For Part 3

Untold

Chapter 77 - Be Careful What You Wish For Part 3

Summary: Continuation of the 'Wish' arc.

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, you guys get two chapters tonight, since the first one is super short! Enjoy! **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I'd already settled that Hiccup was currently five years old, but I wasn't prepared to realize that, mentally, Gobber was about five years old, too. When I thought I was finally calm enough to face the two again, I came striding out of the forest, only to feel my heart nearly stop when I realized they weren't there. But there were shouts and whoops coming from the direction of my house, and I had a funny feeling I knew where they had gone.<p>

I came flying up the steps and threw open the door, to find Hiccup running as fast as he could, his small legs pumping, glancing back at Gobber every few seconds.

Gobber, for his part, would let Hiccup get a bit of a head start, and then would begin chasing after him, keeping pace to the point where he could easily overtake him, and then slowing again, allowing the boy to get ahead of him again.

"Whatâ€¦|what's going on?" I tried to shout, but Gobber yelled over me.

"I'm coming for you!" he warned Hiccup, who gave a slightly hysterical laugh.

"You're not gonna catch me!" The boy called, before running smack into the wall of weapons. The axes and swords fell in a heap around him and he shrieked, curling into a ball.

I screamed, too, rushing over and tearing at the pile to find the boy crouched there. "Hiccup, Hiccupâ€¦|oh, gods, are you alright?!"

"I'm fine," he responded, rubbing ruefully at his nose, which was bright red. "C'mon, Gobber, let's go again!"

I turned angrily on the blacksmith, stepping in front of Hiccup. "Do you realize how serious this could have been?"

"Yesssssâ€¦|." Gobber admitted uncomfortably, dragging out the word. "But it wasn't!" he added brightly.

"He could have died! His head could have gotten separated from his neck! Do you realize how serious this could have been?! And it doesn't matter that it wasn't, because how can I be expected to keep him safe when you're off endangering his life in every way possible!"

"Stoick, I wasn't endangering his life!" Gobber defended himself. "And I wasn't trying to, either! He's perfectly fine, look at him!"

Hiccup blinked innocently up at me.

"He could have gotten hurt!"

"But I'm not hurt!" He sounded a little annoyed now. "I don't know

what the problem is! \_I\_ ran into the wall and messed up all the axes! Be mad at me, not him!"

"No, no one's mad at you!" I snapped, probably completely disproving that point.

He flinched slightly. "Yes, you are, otherwise you wouldn't be yelling!"

"I'm yelling at \_him\_, because he's an idiot!" I responded angrily, pointing to Gobber.

"Hiccup, nobody's mad at you," Gobber cut in swiftly, kneeling down next to him and gently clasping one of his tiny hands. "Stoick's just scared for you, becauseâ€"

"Stoick?" He interrupted quietly, suddenly going pale.

"Yesâ€|" I began uncertainly, and it was then that I realized he had never once asked me my name, and I had never once given it. "Is there a problem?"

And then Hiccup shrieked suddenly and pelted out of the house.

## 78. Be Careful What You Wish For Part 4

Untold

### Chapter 78 - Be Careful What You Wish For Part 4

Summary: Continuation of the 'Wish' arc.

\* \* \*

><p>"What in Odin's name is wrong with you?!"<p>

"You're a mean chief!" Hiccup yelled bravely down from his spot in the tree, clinging to the branch with all the strength he had. He was barely even bending the branch, and I knew he couldn't weigh more than ten or fifteen pounds. "My daddy told me all about you!"

"He's not mean!" Gobber cried. "He's really nice! Just give him a chance!" The blacksmith shot me a look. "Well, \_relatively\_ nice," he amended.

"No!" Hiccup cried stubbornly.

"I'm not going to hurt you!"

"You've hurt my daddy!"

\_That's because your daddy is a freaking dick, \_I considered saying, but I pushed the words back. No need to insult him and teach him a new word at the same time. "No, I haven't!"

"My daddy never lies!"

"All Vikings tell lies, Hiccup, it's a part of our culture!" Gobber bellowed. "Now, c'mon down, and give him a chance! He was perfectly

nice to you before, wasn't he?"

Hiccup considered for a moment. "He yelled at me," he said in a small voice.

Gobber blew out a frustrated breath. "I told you, he's got a Viking temper on him. That's all that was. He's nice, I promise."

Hiccup slowly edged down the branch. It still didn't show any weight was pressing down upon it. "Promise?"

"Yes," Gobber sounded relieved when Hiccup squirmed off the branches, dropping down, as nimble as a monkey.

"Let's try this again," Gobber said, cheerful as ever. "Hiccup, why don't you introduce yourself to—"no, don't hide behind me, now, go over to him, go to \_Stoick\_."

I knelt down next to Hiccup as he slowly approached, but the instant he was close enough for me to reach, he shied away again.

"I'm not going to hurt you," I called desperately.

He peeked shyly out from behind Gobber. "All Vikings tell lies!"

I sent Gobber an exasperated look. He had walked me right into that one. "Well, I don't."

"Are you sure?"

"Yep." \_What he doesn't know won't hurt him.\_

He slowly edged towards me again and this time, he didn't run away. He did draw back slightly, but he stayed put, offering me a small, slightly nervous gap-toothed smile.

I offered him a small smile in return.

Just when I thought he was going to say something like, 'maybe you're not going to hurt me' or something really great like that, he whispered, "I like your beard."

\* \* \*

><p>"Okay, so explain to me again exactly how we're going to change him back?"<p>

"Let's not move too quickly, Stoick, the kid's only just started trusting you," Gobber cautioned.

"But we need to get him changed back, and soon!" I responded in frustration.

Hiccup was barely listening to us as he horsed around on the floor with Toothless, but Gobber was keeping an eye on him to make sure he didn't suddenly take it in his head to wander off again.

"I just wish I hadn't even done this," I mumbled bitterly to myself, shoving my helmet off my forehead.



Gobber's eyes lit up. "That's it!"

"What's it?"

"Once the full moon is up again, why don't you just try wishing him back to normal?"

"Are you serious?"

"It worked once, didn't it?"

"I guessâ€|"

It dawned on me all at once.

"But that means I'm stuck with him for another month!"

## 79. Thunderstorm Part X

Untold

### Chapter 79 - Thunderstorm Part X

Summary: Continuation of 'Thunderstorm'.

**\*\*A/N:** Hey, guys. I finished Camp. And I discovered that I have written 300k this year so far. I'm hoping to hit 500k before the year is up, but I might fail miserably at that endeavor. Is this chapter even any good? Does it even add to the plot? **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>The statue didn't appease Thor.<p>

In fact, the storm that raged that night was fiercer and stronger than ever. I could hear the rain pouring and the wind howling outside the window, driving me to distraction. I put the sketchbook down and pulled the covers over my head, listening to Toothless moan sadly, trying to nuzzle me out.

I was grateful that he hadn't left my side all day, but I couldn't help feeling guilty, too; Toothless loved rain and thunder, and he wouldn't even play in it anymore because of me. I was taking happiness away from everyone, no matter which way I turned. And this storm just proved that. This storm proved I didn't belong here.

I was so distracted that I didn't realize Stoick was home until the bedroom door opened suddenly, interrupting my thoughts. "Hiccup?" He whispered as he crept slowly into the room. "Are you alright?"

I pressed my head down harder on the pillow. "Fine." My voice came out muffled thanks to the blanket.

Stoick gently pulled the quilt away. "Get out of there. You'll suffocate."

I sighed, studying the darkening sky outside, because I could feel Stoick watching me and I really didn't want to acknowledge him. "I'm sorry."

Stoick raised an eyebrow. "What have you done wrong?"

"Iâ€¦these stormsâ€¦Thor's mad at me." My voice grew smaller and smaller the longer I talked, until finally I sounded more like a small child than like myself. "I know how much stress it's causing you, and I'm sorry."

"Hiccup, no, that's notâ€¦you're not the cause of these storms. Okay? I don't know what is causing them, but whatever it is, we're going to find it."

I wanted to argue with him. My emotions were all over the place from my decision to leave if the whole statue thing didn't work out. And, seeing as it hadn't, I wasn't in a particularly great mood. And I wanted to yell at Stoick, to scream at him, to prove to him that I was inadvertently causing these storms and I needed to get away from the island as fast as I possibly could. He could pretend all he wanted, but even from up here, I could see that the lightning was growing so bad that it had been setting houses on fire all day.

Of course, the storm had grown noticeably worse after the statueâ€¦

I closed my eyes, groaning inwardly. Mildew was completely right.

"I promise." He gave my shoulder a light squeeze.

I nodded without replying.

I felt him drop a light kiss onto my forehead, and my heart ached with how much it hurt to know I was leaving. I hadn't said a word to Toothless, not yet, but ever since the storm had started up again, he had looked at me strangely, as if sensing my plan.

"Do you want to sleep in my bed tonight?" Stoick offered quietly, but I just shook my head.

"I'll be fine."

"Hiccup, you don't have to pretend around me."

"I'm not pretending." God. I didn't want to leave.

"It's okay to be scared."

"I'm not scared." Every flash of lightning sent another rip of fear hurtling through me, and every boom of thunder made my stomach give an unpleasant jolt, but I wasn't really afraid of the storm anymore. The comments of the villagers were a lot worse than a noisy black sky.

He sighed. Softly, and to himself. "Alright. Come downstairs if you do start to get scared, okay?"

>I nodded listlessly. Alvin had always gotten mad at me whenever I woke him because I was scared, or asked to crawl in bed with him. The memory made my eyes sting, although I had long since stopped feeling pain about his rejection of me; I knew it was just my emotions from leaving. But still, the memory was strong in my mind, and I knew I would not be going to Stoick, no matter how scared I got. I woke him

quite enough by screaming my head off or crying like a baby due to nightmares. I wasn't going to wake him during a rare night when I was perfectly calm.<p>

It took forever, but Stoick finally left me alone. He finally went downstairs and shut his bedroom door. I listened for a few extra minutes, making sure he wasn't going to come back out again, and then I dropped down to the floor. I didn't bother packing anything. I'd run away from Alvin that last time with nothing but the clothes on my back and the sketchbook in my vest, which he never even knew was there; otherwise, I'm sure he would have taken it away from me and burned it.

I didn't have very many possessions added to that when I arrived on Berk, exceptâ€|my mind strayed to the Viking helmet Stoick had given me on Snoggletog night, and then the clothes he had sewn for me. No, I wouldn't bother taking those things. The clothes were in the closet, and the Viking helmet was downstairs, next to his. I didn't belong in nice clothes. I belonged in rags.

Toothless watched me curiously as I sat there, indecisive, and I tried to force a smile for him. "I don't want to leave you," I whispered.

He nuzzled me gently with his nose. \_You won't ever have to.\_

"No, Toothless," I gently pushed him away, looking him in the eye. "It's not fair of me. I don't deserve a home on Berk, but \_you\_ do. You don't have to come with me, not if you don't want to. You can stay here, if you want."

Toothless growled as he finally began to understand what I meant, shoving me down onto the wooden floor. He pinned me there, glaring down at me with bared teeth.

I offered him a small, sad smile. "You should at least consider the merits," I told him, reaching up and patting his nose consolingly. "No more running after some stupid kid, and no more having to deal with Alvin because of me. No more thunderstorms because I'm cursed."

Toothless once told me without words that he accepted me, flaws and all. This time, he did much the same thing, except he wasn't as nice about it. He glared menacingly down at me, growling to shut me up.

"Hey, I'm only saying. I mean, you couldn't fly for a bit once I was gone, but once somebody figured out how to work the tail finâ€|the merits greatly outweigh the disadvantages, once you think about it."

Toothless growled again, nuzzling me gently.

I gave him a tiny, grateful smile. "You're coming with?"

But I could tell that he thought leaving was unnecessary.

"Look, I'm just gonna leave for a few days, and, if the storm clears, I'll be back, okay?" I tried to kind of stretch the truth and make it sound like I still wasn't sure whether the storms were because of me

or not. Call it a hunch, but I thought Toothless might take that outlook better than my real one.

He fell silent, considering it. While he did this, I stripped off my vest and grabbed the riding one, beginning to buckle it on. "In fact, we might even only have to stay gone for a couple hours to test it," I added. I worried that I was laying it on too thick by the way he looked at me after that, but he allowed me to climb on his back nonetheless.

I put my feet in the stirrups, wincing a little when the prosthetic found its pedal. The stump was still tender and sore, especially during bad weather.

"Alright, bud. Let's go."

## 80. Broken

Untold

### Chapter 80 - Broken

Summary: Sometimes, Hiccup forgets that Stoick loves him.

\*\*A/N: GUYS I know the Vikings did not have glass, but I got really lazy trying to think of material that would break, and porcelain probably would if dropped from a height, but it's also a pretty tough material, and I didn't want to risk stretching reality. Wood and metal, which their tankards are likely to be made of in Viking times, wouldn't have broken if it dropped, so I needed something that would. So, yeah. Apparently, glass was a substance in those times now. Deal with it :P \*\*

\*\*Secondly, I'm really sorry that I wrote this random thing based off the prompt 'broken dish'. Like, why did I have a prompt like that XD but I was going through severe Hiccup/Stoick father/son withdrawal, because in Unbreakable, Stoick has not yet appeared. I can't wait to bring him into the story, but the issue is, I don't want to risk rushing the plot for the sake of satisfying my Hiccup/Stoick father/son needs, so instead, you guys will probably just be seeing a lot of unrealistic and outrageously fluffy one-shots from me until he does come in, okay? \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>It was kind of embarrassing to admit, but the reason it happened in the first place is probably because Stoick's glass was bigger than I was. He had left his glass on the table, see, and I was trying to clear off the table so we could eat dinner, and I didn't want to ask him to help me lift a dish, for Thor's sake, so I just held it as carefully as I could as I took it off the table. Unfortunately, it slipped from my hands and crashed onto the wooden floor.<p>

The glass shattered into a spider web of glittering fragments and I heard Stoick shout my name as he came running into the room. I took a step away from the glass when he entered. "I'mâ€¦I'm so sorryâ€¦"

"Don't move!" He said harshly, and I froze in obedience, waiting for

him to cross the room and smack me on the face for being so clumsy, but he just knelt down and began sweeping up the glass.

"Are you alright?" he whispered as he worked, his tone softening again. "You didn't get hurt or step on any glass, did you?"

I shook my head miserably. "I'm sorry," I mumbled helplessly.

"What for?" he looked up at me questioningly as he dumped the broken glass off the plate and into a small brown sack.

I gestured to the glass. "I didn't mean to break it."

He shrugged, tossing the sack out the open window, not even glancing back to see where it landed. "It's just a glass, Hiccup."

"Wait. You don't care?"

"I can get another glass." he offered me a bit of a smile, ruffling my hair as he knelt down next to me. "I was more concerned that you might have stepped on it. I can get another glass, but I can't get another Hiccup."

"Can't imagine why you'd want another," I mumbled, my cheeks heating. I dropped my eyes to cleared wooden floor. "I provide enough trouble for ten."

He didn't appear to have heard me, because all he said was, "Really, don't worry about the glass, Hiccup."

"So, you're really not mad?" I asked, raising an eyebrow. I guess I didn't realize how small my voice had gone when I'd apologized, but he must have, because his eyes softened unexpectedly.

"Of course not," he responded gently. "I'm sorry for yelling at you, I was just scared. But you don't have to be afraid of me, Hiccup. I'm never gonna hurt you."

I looked away, unable to meet his eye. "I know that," I murmured.

No. I didn't know that, not for sure, and I could tell by his expression that he was thinking the same thing. He dropped a kiss on the top of my head. "You will. One day, you will."

## 81. Vikings Don't Part V

Untold

### Chapter 81 - Vikings Don't Part V

Summary: A continuation of 'Vikings Don't'.

\*\*A/N: Okay! Two chapters in one day! Yes? No? No opinion? Well, I really want to hit 700 reviews and I'm only 20 away! So I don't mean to be annoying or anything, but can you guys review this chapter a ton? :3 I don't expect to get twenty reviews on this one alone, but I think it'd be cool to hit it soon :3 So yes. Oh, oh, I'm forgetting something...hold it...\*\*

**\*\*Oh, this is dedicated to TheOneWithTheScar. She is freaking amazing with Hiccup/Stoick fluff (her fanfiction "The Forgotten Boy" has me in a raging ball of feels at times, to the point where I can't even frickin review) and she requested two new 'Vikings Don't' things. I will get to her other one, which was 'Vikings don't get tired'. That one is going to be shamelessly feelsy, because I am freaking making up for lost time on which I didn't write anything fluffy for Hiccup and Stoick xP I read this author who feels the same way on North/Jack father/son fluff, so I think I'm okay xD Also, I feel kinda sick to my stomach. WHICH REMINDS ME I WAS EATING TOOTHLESS-SHAPED CHICKEN NUGGETS TODAY FOR DINNER :DDDDD \*\***

**\*\*Okay, so yep. Crap-long AN and a random fact about my day.\*\***

**\* \* \***

<p><strong>5. Vikings Don't Get Cold<strong>

It was probably the coldest day of the year, in the midst of the coldest winter I could ever remember us experiencing. Sure, we got snow sometimes, but this was a blizzard by the likes of which I had never seen. The howling wind was chilling to the bone, and every snowflake stung my cheeks, my chest, my trembling arms. I was trying desperately to lock in warmth, but all I could do was stand there and shiver, bent half-over in an attempt to protect myself from the wind.

I knew that the other Outcasts must be watching from the window of the Great Hall, maybe trying to see if my skin had turned blue yet. I shuddered from the cold as the door of the building in question creaked open suddenly, and my father stepped out, heading straight for me. I shivered again, but I felt a warmth when I realized he was letting me back in. He really couldn't bear to do this to his only son, to tie him to a metal post and leave him to stand out here, almost completely naked, in the middle of a blizzard. I was so grateful I was almost crying as he approached.

"Thank you," I rasped. "Thank you."

He raised a thick eyebrow. "For what?"

"You'reâ€¦you're letting me go."

I would never, ever forget the look on his face, that scornful laugh that rang out loudly and clearly, even through the howling wind and swirling snow. "Why should I let you go?"

I shivered again. "I'mâ€¦I'm your son," I stammered in between chattering teeth.

"Not anymore," he shrugged indifferently, leaning down next to me to tighten the ropes. "And for the record, Hiccup, Vikings don't get cold. Take it like a man."

**\* \* \***

><p>"Oh, Hiccup, you must be freezing." Stoick opened the door wide enough to let me slip inside and I saw that he had a roaring fire in the hearth and he handed me his thick fur cloak to warm up in.<p>

I eyed it cautiously for a couple seconds before dismissing it with a shrug. "Vikings don't get cold."

Stoick's concerned look evaporated, and he rolled his eyes. "Hiccup, where did you hear that?"

"O-Outcast Island," I shuddered, collapsing by the fire and pretending I wasn't gratefully drinking in the warmth. I scooted a little closer, hoping he wouldn't notice.

I felt a sudden weight on my shoulders and I glanced around, realizing he had dropped his fur cloak over me like a blanket. Stoick seated himself next to me by the fire. "Doesn't look like it's true."

"I'm not," I defended myself. "I've stood outside in raging blizzards. I'm hardcore!"

He didn't smile at my weak attempt at humor, maybe because I was mentally adding, not by choice.

He sighed and shook his head. "Despite what you think, Hiccup, Vikings do get cold."

"You don't," I muttered under my breath.

"Yes, I do," he responded. "It just takes a little longer for cold to affect me, because I'm bigger than you are. Hence, I'm able to conserve body heat better."

I glanced down at the floor, staying silent.

"Just stop putting so much pressure on yourself to be so tough. You are tough, you're as tough as any Viking out there, you're just not as big, or as violent, and there's nothing wrong with that." He gave my shoulder a reassuring squeeze. "And no more flying in blizzards."

"But Berk's blizzards just appear out of nowhere!" I argued. "One second, the sky was perfectly clear, and the next second, I could barely see! I didn't really get a lot of advance warning."

"No flying in the winter, then?"

I shook my head to let him know that that wasn't approved.

"We'll figure something out," he shrugged. "For now, stay by the fire and get warm, okay?" He kissed the top of my head.

I waited a few seconds, and then I glanced over to make sure he wasn't looking. I pulled his cloak closer to me, savoring the warmth it offered after that awful snowstorm.

"Despite what you think, Vikings do get cold."

Maybe this was one argument I would let him win, I conceded silently.

## 82. Witness Part 1

Untold

### Chapter 82 - Witness Part 1

Summary: An alternative to the 'Be Careful What You Wish For'.

**\*\*A/N: GUYS READ THIS\*\***

**\*\*This is an alternate thing to \_Be Careful What You Wish For\_. That arc is still going, but I'm losing interest in it right now, because it's a wee bit fluffy for my taste, honestly. This is more its angsty counterpart, if you will, which will probably receive more of my attention because I really am not one for fluff. I'm more one for quiet feels, if you will, but that arc is just outrageous fluff.\*\***

**\*\*Also, DON'T STOP READING I STILL HAVE ONE MORE ANNOUNCEMENT - I know Stoick reacts in this arc as if he never knew that Alvin raised Hiccup as his son, while in the other, he seemed to know all along, but I decided I wanted that to be there. I registered that it was going to look like a mistake, but I didn't really feel like taking the time to correct this mistake. So, yeah. Also, I really wanted to title this arc 'Angst and Pain', but I needed a clever title. Still looking for one...hold on, I'm gonna sit here and brainstorm for a minute...\*\***

**\*\*Yeah, I only need 10 reviews until I hit 700. I don't really expect to get that many on this chapter, either, but thanks for all the reviews I did get on the last one. I don't feel so great today, guys. I'd appreciate some reviews, but if this arc turns out to be too weird/angsty for you guys to handle, I understand and I'll let it die slowly. Reader support is really what keeps me going most days. Also, I'm listening to Adrian Von Ziegler's 'Night Mist' as I type this AN. I love this song. Also, I love his 'Winter Breath' and 'Blood Night' and 'The Sealed Kingdom' and 'Witch Factory' and basically everything I have ever heard of his, I love. I just love this guy, I really do. He helps me a lot when it comes to writing, or at least his music does. Without him, I wouldn't write half the crap I do. Still trying to find a clever title for this dumb arc...what shall I call it...? \*\***

**\* \* \***

><p>"I just wish I could have known Hiccup beforeâ€|when he was a childâ€|"<p>

Hardly had the words left my mouth than when the room around me started to blur, colors and sounds becoming a screaming whirlwind as they drew me in.

It was like being inside a twister, yet I was the only thing within the swirling cyclone. In the midst of all the sights and colors mixing together, I spotted Hiccup's face, green eyes sparkling with the exuberance and life he was always bursting with. The face grew smaller, the green eyes hardening with anger. And then the face grew even smaller, the eyes instead turning fearful.



Different emotions played out in his green eyes as I was thrown continually backward, watching as the fear turned to dread, which turned to anxiety which turned to heartbreak. As I watched Hiccup steadily growing skinnier and smaller, I realized with a start of shock that I was somehow watching him grow down. The whirlwind suddenly came to a screeching halt, depositing me gently onto a grassy knoll, the sun shining brightly down on me. Birds twittered and fluttered about, but I was not to be tricked by beauty; those trees in the distance were Loki trees, and they only grew in one place.

I recognized the house located on the knoll as the chieftain's house, but I didn't want Alvin. I wanted to find Hiccup, and find out exactly what was going on, but I had a horrible feeling that I already knew. I replayed the scenarios in my head, being picked up and tossed about in the screaming twister, and watching Hiccup grow down, almost instantly after I had made the wish to know him as a child. It made sense, as I remembered the tales that my own father used to tell me about making a wish on the night of the full moon. I groaned quietly to myself as I thought of it, but I was quickly distracted from my own thoughts as the door to Alvin's hut opened and he appeared in the doorway. He wasn't alone; he was leading a small boy by the collar of his brown shirt. The boy was struggling to keep up with Alvin, trying not to let the man drag him.

When Alvin tossed him carelessly onto the grass, I realized that that small boy was Hiccup. He had to be; he was much younger, obviously, maybe five or six, but age couldn't dim the emerald green eyes, nor take away the freckles or tame the wild auburn hair. My hand flew to the hilt of my sword, ready to start fighting the instant Alvin noticed me, but he walked right by me as if I wasn't even there.

"You can come back inside when you've learned to be a man," Alvin snarled, towering threateningly over the little boy.

Hiccup cowered before him, making my gut clench in rage. Even when he was a small child, Alvin had not shown him mercy.

"I'm sorry, Daddy," Hiccup's trembling voice cut through my red-tinted vision. "Iâ€¦I didn't mean to be weakâ€¦"

\_Daddy? \_

This word made my thoughts come to a screeching halt. Why was Hiccup calling Alvin Daddy? Alvin wasn't Hiccup's daddy, he wasn'tâ€¦

And then I realized why Hiccup had sounded so hurt when he'd told me his story, talked about Alvin turning against him, smacking him on the face and I felt stupid for never realizing it before. He had grown up mistreated by Alvin, but it had hurt him so much because he had grown up thinking Alvin was his father. It had never made sense to me, really, the way Hiccup spoke of him, like he'd craved love and affection, expected it really, for years, and never received it, but it suddenly made sense.

The shock lasted for much longer, but a moment was all it took for me to get it under enough control. The thing I couldn't control was the raging anger, turning my blood boiling hot. I wanted to rip out my sword and attack Alvin then and there, but I was completely frozen to

the spot, watching helplessly as Hiccup clutched at the hem of the Outcast chieftain's cloak.

"Enough, Hiccup." Alvin easily pried Hiccup's tiny, clutching fingers away. "Take it like a man."

Hiccup shrank back, looking hurt, and he didn't move for a few long moments after Alvin had disappeared into the hut. He sighed to himself, rising from the ground and dusting himself off. Although he still had traces of sadness lingering around his eyes and mouth, he was clearly used to this treatment, and began heading for the forest.

"Who knows?" he said aloud to himself, surprisingly optimistically, I thought as I managed to control myself enough to follow. "Maybe I'll find a dragon here, and I'll cut out its heart and bring it to Daddy, and then he'll love me!"

My heart squeezed when I heard his words, the rage bubbling beneath the surface beginning to rise again. Hiccup kept ignoring me, even when I reached out to rest a comforting hand upon his shoulder. In fact, my hand never even made it to his shoulder. There seemed to be a transparent barrier separating us, one I couldn't break or pass through.

Hiccup quickened his pace, skipping along and shoving stray tree branches out of his way, brushing his hair out of his eyes. "And then Halfdan won't make fun of me anymore, and tell me I'm useless, and Daddy will quit telling me to find a cliff and jump off of it, and Tessa will quit telling me to get eaten by a dragon!" He beamed to nobody but himself, making me wonder who on earth Tessa and Halfdan were. I watched as he bounced along through the forest, but I couldn't touch him and I couldn't speak to him. Yes, I could speak aloud, but he couldn't hear me, no matter if I was shouting or not. I knew he wasn't ignoring me on purpose, that he didn't even know I was there, but I couldn't help feeling annoyed with him.

It wasn't even close to my rage at Alvin, of course, but it was definitely there. Once I began to understand that I couldn't touch Hiccup, I reluctantly concluded that charging into Alvin's hut and running him through with my sword was both impossible and unhealthy, especially for a child this young to go through that.

So I walked with him through the forest, because being close by appeared to be the only thing I could do. He looked for a dragon for a long time in the forest, and to my surprise, he didn't go back home when night began to fall. He looked around, spotted a huge, towering tree and curled up beneath it, arms wrapped around himself for warmth. He looked up at the stars and moon for a long while. "And if I find a dragon and kill it," he whispered to the stars, "my mommy will come back to me, and she'll never leave again." I could see him smiling to himself in the starlight. "I'll be okay. Things will get better." This last line he spoke with conviction. "They will. I believe they will."

He rolled over and fell into a deep sleep, still half-smiling.

Untold

## Chapter 83 - Sing Me to Sleep

Summary: Hiccup has a nightmare and Stoick tries to comfort him. The trouble is, Stoick's presence might not be welcome at the moment.

\*\*A/N: Hello :D sorry it's not the 'Witness' arc or one of the others, but I felt an urge to write sad!Hiccup and fatherly!Stoick. (And what else is new?) Anyway, so yeah. I hope you all like this. This one-shot is named after 'Sing Me to Sleep' by...Emily Brown, I think? Hold on, lemme check. No, Emily Browning. Well, I was close. I'm pretty sure she's not the original artist, but IDK. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I was having a bad night.<p>

I had lain down to sleep at the end of the day, drained and exhausted from all the work in the forge, and fallen asleep almost at once, but my dreams hadn't exactly been restful. Alvin the Treacherous kept flitting in and out of them, but he wasn't the worst part, the image that appeared behind my lids every time I so much as dared to blink. It was Stoick's face that I kept seeing, and no matter how many times I told myself that he would never hurt me, I didn't believe it. Because his face was a cold, hard mask, his brows drawn down into a terrible scowl, one hand clutching the sword I had painstakingly crafted for him. It moved slowly along my arm, and though at the time, I hadn't known what he was carving, I knew now, remembering the feeling of him ripping the letter 'T' into my skin, and then the 'R', and the 'A'â€|

My heartbeat quickened as I thought of it, and the pain that had been gnawing at my stump for the past hour and preventing me from even so much as standing without Toothless' help reached its peak. I rolled over, feeling tears form in my eyes, but I didn't care about looking weak now. In the dead of night, who was here to see me but me?

I guess I'd thought that I was over what had happened when they'd found out I was an Outcast, but I wasn't. I told myself that if I just didn't think about it, it would one day go away. I was still waiting for that day to come. I pulled the blanket closer to me and buried my head in my pillow, feeling the sobs wracking my body. My body that was so scarred and whipped and beaten that I hated looking at. My body that Stoick had branded.

My breath caught in my throat and my sobs grew in volume, and I regretted letting them do that because Toothless awoke with a start, as if sensing my distress. He walked over and crooned, trying to nudge me up, to figure out what was wrong.

"It's nothing," I sniffled, trying to stifle another sob. The last thing I felt like doing was refreshing Toothless' memory of that horrible night. He had allowed Stoick to touch me and hold me after I had awoken, but Stoick had informed me since that day that Toothless was always cautious around him, and the day I'd lost my leg, he'd barely let the chieftain within an inch of me.

Toothless crooned gently, trying to pull me off the bed and wrap me

in a hug, but this jostled my leg and a cry fell from my lips. "You're hurting me!" It was instinctive, and I knew how bad he would feel afterwards for it, but it just slipped out. Toothless backed off, his green eyes going wide and apologetic.

"It's okay," I whispered, sinking back down onto the bed. "I know you didn't mean to, but \_damn\_, it hurts"

Toothless nuzzled the top of my head worriedly, and I would have smiled at this familiar gesture had I not heard footsteps on the stairs. My breath caught in my throat and I sat bolt upright, waiting for the door to open and an Outcast to come charging in

Question was, would they leap in and grab me by the throat or would I have time to get to my feet, get on Toothless' back? Could I even do so without assistance?

Well, better try now, I told myself as the door began to creak. Even as I pushed back the covers and prepared to stand up, readying myself for the pain, the door flew open and Stoick came charging in.

I flinched instinctively when I saw him, still lost in memories of that terrible night.

"Are you alright? Are you okay? I heard you start saying that somebody was hurting you" his confidence seemed to flicker as he saw me sitting up, looking perfectly alright. "I thought maybe you might be yeah, never mind. I guess I was dreaming." He started to turn back around, to leave the room, but the sight of his face sent me into another round of sobs.

He turned on his heel and came rushing back to me, sinking down on my bed and pulling me into his lap. "Hiccup, what's wrong?"

"I'm sorry," I sniffled, wiping at my nose and trying to make my painful way away from him again. My leg was throbbing anew because he'd accidentally squeezed it a bit when he'd pulled me up, but I tried not to let it show. "I shouldn't be sorry I'll be okay go back to sleep."

"No, what's wrong?" he held my arms fast, tilting my chin up so I couldn't look away from him. "Please tell me."

The kindness in his eyes was too much to take. I knew that he had apologized, but all I kept seeing was that cold, angry look turning his gray gaze the color of steel, and it just made me cry harder, pushing me completely over the edge. I knew that I should have tried to get away, to get as far away, as fast as I possibly could, from him, but I couldn't. I was tired of running, and tired of hiding from my feelings, so I put my forehead against his shoulder and cried.

Stoick settled himself back against the pillows, settling me against his legs and beginning to stroke my hair. "It's okay, it's okay," he soothed gently. "You're okay. You're okay. Nobody can hurt you here. I won't let anyone hurt you."

"You hurt me," I whispered through my tears, shaking with sobs and sorrow. "You hurt me." I dissolved into fresh tears so soon after spitting out the words that it was a miracle that Stoick could hear

them at all.

"What do you mean?" His eyes went wide, as if he couldn't comprehend what I was saying. "No, Hiccup, I would neverâ€"

"You branded me," I mumbled, burying my face in his chest and beard, letting the tears escape. "You branded me. Andâ€|and when I landed here, I told myself no attachments. Because I've been running for so long that it's better to stay alone while I d-do itâ€|and then you started acting like a father to me and I let myself get attached, andâ€|" I started crying too hard to speak then, but even through my tears, I couldn't miss how horrified and sorrowful Stoick looked.

"Oh, sonâ€|" he sighed softly, scooping me up into his arms and rocking me the way one might a very small and restless child. "I'm so sorry."

I clung to him, trying my hardest to stem the tears, even though I knew it was hopeless. "I'm sick," I hiccuped with the effort it took to control the sobs, "I'm sick and t-tired of being hurt. I just w-wanted you to l-love me, and you br-branded me."

I think Stoick began to cry a little, then, too, but in the darkened room, lit only by moonlight, I couldn't tell. I could hear the rain outside, but there was no thunder, and the rain wasn't heavy or loud. Just a soft pattering in the background, nothing scary at all. Thank Thor, because the last thing I needed in that moment was a storm sending me over the edge to a full-on panic attack.

"I'll never hurt you again." He hugged me tightly, my ear resting against his chest. His heart was steady and strong, comforting. "I never, ever will. I hated every second of what I was doing. And I know that I don't deserve your forgiveness. I've hurt you too much and cut you too deeply, but I'm going to try my hardest to make it up to you. And I'll never hurt you again. You can trust me on that."

"I want to trust you on that." I wiped a hand along my nose, but the tears just kept flowing, and I gave up on trying to stop them. I squeezed my eyes closed, concentrating more on his heartbeat than his face. That made it easier to speak. "I really, really want to, but promises aren't worth anything, they don't mean anything."

"I'll make it up to you," he insisted, sweeping tear-soaked bangs back off my forehead. "If only you'll let me. I can't if you don't let me."

Toothless kept nosing and nuzzling me, trying desperately to make me feel better, and I patted his nose gently, trying to assure him that I was okay, even if I wasn't. He needed me too much for me to break down like this, so I tried to fight my way out of Stoick's arms and back onto the bed. Maybe if I wasn't so close to him, I'd be able to stop crying.

Stoick tightened his hold on me instinctively, but even when he loosened it again, I didn't bother fighting anymore. I was too drained by now. It had been a long day, and an even longer night and I just wanted to sleep now. Crying was exhausting, and I didn't have the strength for much more.

He kissed the top of my head gently, his breath tickling my scalp.  
"I'm never hurting you again. I promise."

I sniffled back a sarcastic response. I didn't feel like pointing out how unlikely it was that people who made promises actually kept them.

"And I know you don't believe me in words, but I'll prove it to you with my actions," he insisted, as if he had read my mind. He hugged me tighter, resting his chin on top of my head. "I will. I'll spend the rest of my life proving to you that I'm never going to hurt you, if I have to."

Even if he didn't plan on carrying this promise out, the words still had a profound effect on me. Who'd be willing to waste the rest of their life " on \_me\_?

I started to cry a little again, but I didn't want him to see this, so I just buried my head in his chest and pretended to be sleeping.

I felt him brushing my hair back from my head, felt his throat vibrating as he hummed a soothing melody above me. He took a break from humming just to whisper, "I've got you." He went back to humming and stroking my hair, and it made me feel like maybe my sleep wasn't going to be that pretend anymore. He began to sing something, a lullaby, I think, for restless or scared children, but around that time I had sank into a real sleep, and I didn't really catch anything except:

"\_Lay down to rest, my dearâ€|" \_

## 84. Bravado

Untold

### Chapter 84 - Bravado

Summary: Snotlout knows he's an Outcast, but he's still kind of proud of Hiccup anyway.

**\*\*A/N: OKAY. This was a request from Guest, so this is dedicated to Guest, who, months and months ago, requested Alvin coming for Hiccup and Hiccup showing bravado (In chapter 34 of To Be Loved the Way You Love Me) from one of the teens' POVs. I considered the others, especially Astrid, but Astrid is difficult for me to write, as I really don't know her feelings in this scene. She probably, I imagine, felt frustrated with Hiccup too when he allowed Alvin to see his fear, but I really don't know. So. I hope Guest enjoys this superlate request. (I DO get to requests. Just after a looooong wait.)\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>Vikings were supposed to be fearless.<p>

So why was I shaking as one of Alvin's men shoved me forward, a sword at my back? I kept my head down, facing the ground, kicking up dust and pebbles and thinking, \_This can't be real, this can't be real,

this can't be real.\_

Way back in the Bad Old Days, or so my father told me, Outcasts and Hooligans had a constant, ongoing blood feud. Members of both tribes never dared to venture from the island alone, terrified of being attacked by somebody from the opposite tribe.

People took sides in that feud. The Murderous were, of course, with the Outcasts, as were the Lava-Louts and the Hysterics and the Bashem-Oiks, but the Meatheads sided with us. This was before we'd made peace and allied with the Bog-Burglars, and the tribe fought what appeared to be a losing battle. Finally, when the cloud of war lightened, and the sun of peace shone through, as my dad explained, the feud was broken, and it had become more of a casual disagreement than an actual blood feud. Outcasts had never been seen on our shores since.

And now? Now here I was, being pushed roughly along by a masked, seemingly faceless Outcast soldier, the twins and Fishlegs on one side, Astrid on the other. Fishlegs was gibbering, he was so terrified, and Ruffnut was trying to get close enough to punch her brother. Astrid, I could tell, was fuming with herself for getting caught so easily, but I couldn't blame her, or any of us. We had all been taken by surprise. They had come out of nowhere.

"Hey, can you loosen your grip?" Tuffnut asked hopefully of his own Outcast escort, suddenly breaking the thick silence. "It's a bit hard to keep walking with you jerking my head back every five seconds."

The Outcast frowned, but readjusted his grip.

Tuffnut smiled. "Thanks, man."

The Outcasts didn't seem to know what to make of the twins who, by all accounts, should have been whimpering in fear like Fishlegs. I was afraid, too, but I tried not to let it show. And then, suddenly, we had emerged from out of the shadows of the silent wooden huts and shops in the village streets, and arrived in the village square, blinking in the bright sunlight after those dark shadows.

Gobber and the chief were already there, heavily flanked by Outcasts themselves. And there, in the middle of the plaza, staring fearlessly up at the large, hulking men surrounding him, was the cause of all this trouble.

It was hard to believe that somebody as innocent-looking as Hiccup could be responsible for putting a whole island under siege. The large green eyes, numerous freckles splashed across his face, and his tiny stature just screamed harmless.

There was something cold and predatory in Alvin the Treacherous' gaze as he circled Hiccup, a twisted smile curving his scarred lips upward.

"Hey, Hiccup, I know we banished you and all, but do you mind telling your friends to loosen their grip a little?"

I sent Tuffnut a 'be quiet' look, and Alvin ignored the both of us. Kneeling down next to Hiccup, he ran a finger under the boy's chin

and whispered, "Long time, no see."

Hiccup flinched back slightly, an expression of pure fear entering his green eyes. He seemed frozen, unable to move or speak, and I closed my eyes so I wouldn't have to look at him anymore. He clearly knew nothing about being a Viking, even if he was an Outcast. He should know that you were never supposed to show fear.

Toothless growled suddenly as Alvin's fingers moved onto Hiccup's cheek, almost lovingly, but the Outcast chieftain never once took his eyes off the boy in front of him. "Gentlemen," he murmured, sounding more like he was talking to himself than giving an order, "this is just a friendly chat between two old chums. You may handle the Night Fury."

A few of the Outcasts nodded and began going for Toothless, but Alvin recaptured my attention almost immediately. "Now, Hiccup, you happen to be the very person I came here for."

There was a second of silence and then Hiccup squeezed his eyes shut. When he opened them again, a fire had started behind them and he straightened up. "I thought I might be."

I knew he was an Outcast, knew he was no good, but I felt a surge of fierce pride for him, seeing him facing Alvin down, appearing completely unafraid. I had seen the truth in his eyes. Whatever had happened between the two, the chieftain positively terrified Hiccup. But you wouldn't have known it from looking at him.

"But, I mean, c'mon," Hiccup continued, sounding almost bored now as he gestured to me and the others. "A full-scale invasion? Just for me? I'm flattered, really. I didn't think I'd mean quite that much to you."

"Of course you do." Alvin's voice was dropping, lower and lower, as if wanting to shut everyone else out of the conversation. "How could we ever forget you?"

A tiny pinprick of fear entered Hiccup's eyes again, but with one quick blink, it was gone, vanished.

"Despite how stealthy you think you are, Dragon Boy, you left a trail of clues a mile wide," Alvin smirked. "It was easy, really."

"There's a bit of a disappointment," Hiccup's voice shook, but I still couldn't deny that burst of pride I felt in him, for facing his enemy, showing no fear. When I fixed my gaze on Alvin, all I felt was a blinding rage, an inexplicable desire to protect Hiccup from the horrors that the Outcasts had clearly put him through.

"Because the next time I escape, and the time after that, whyâ€¦I'll just have to work on my sneakiness, I suppose."

Alvin gave a little laugh, but everything in it screamed of menace. And then he leaned closer to Hiccup, so close that Hiccup gave up all pretense once again, flinching back.

"You can try, sure. But you will never get away from me again."



Hiccup forced himself up. With another blink, the fear vanished.

## 85. First Apology

Untold

### Chapter 85 - First Apology

Summary: Sequel to chapter 68, 'First Fight'. Hiccup and Stoick apologize, and try to talk things out.

**\*\*A/N: GUYS LISTEN\*\***

**\*\*This is part 2 to Chapter 68, 'First Fight'. I'm actually okay with that one-shot, now, and I hope this one is better than okay. This is dedicated to Jayalaw and TheOneWithTheScar. Jayalaw because that was her/his request, and TheOneWithTheScar because she graciously agreed to let me use her 'warm milk and honey makes Hiccup tired' head canon. I CANNOT PRETEND THAT I DO NOT LOVE IT OKAY IT IS TOO CUTE\*\***

**\*\*Anyway, there should be a part 3, but IDK if there'll be anything afterwards, and I don't even know when part 3 will come in. So. Yeah. I hope you all like. Thanks for all the reviews on these last few chapters! Did I thank you for pushing me over 700? IDK. I know I definitely thanked you in Unbreakable, but just in case I didn't here: THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU, OH MY GOSHHHH \*\***

**\*\*Also, I updated Overachiever, and this should not upset me but it does: Overachiever. Outstripped. To Be Loved the Way You Love Me. I legitimately hoped none of my stories would do that, honestly xD but I'm biased because I love that AU quite a lot. I looked over the first few chapters again the other day and that writing is horrendous, but I can deal with that. I'm rewriting anyway. In September, methinks. Anyway, I sound so egotistical saying that I love To Be Loved the Way You Love Me, but it's more like I love the idea and the relationship Hiccup and Stoick have as a result from the story. ONLY TO BE COMPLETELY ANNIHILATED IN UNBREAKABLE AHAHAHAHA. Anyway. I can tell I've been on for way too long, so I'm getting off.\*\***

**\*\*OH WAIT: Do you want to hear a pizza joke? It's pretty cheesy :D oh, and also, angst. That is all, I think. I promise my next update or so WILL be the next part of an arc! \*\***

**\* \* \***

><p>My steps down the stairs were slow and deliberate, the only sound I made the soft 'step, <em>tap<em>' of my prosthetic and boot. When I finally made it into the kitchen, Stoick was stirring something in a surprisingly small mug, but this mystery was solved when he set the cup down on my side of the table.

"There," he said gently. "That normally warms people up and calms them down." He slowly took the seat across from my usual spot, and I slid into the chair, pulling the sleeves of the spare red tunic he had sewn me down farther. I eyed the swirling, yellowish white liquid

in the mug a bit suspiciously. "I don't need any calming down."

"Hiccup!" Stoick sighed, obviously steeling himself. "We need to talk."

"Talk." I echoed cautiously. "Okay."

"I think it's clear we need to set some ground rules."

"Ground rules," I repeated uncertainly, nodding a little before the meaning of the words hit me. I frowned. "Wait, what?" I gripped the mug's handle rather hard, spinning the cup back and forth nervously.

Stoick scowled a bit. "You know, you can drink that. It's not anything dangerous, it's just a simple mix of warm milk and honey."

I raised an eyebrow, still stuck on the last thing he'd said before this. "Right."

"Honestly, it just helps small children sleep and relaxes, that's all."

I took a hesitant sip, surprised by how good it tasted before I set it down and faced him again. "So ground rules?"

"We need to set some, to figure out what to do about you and Toothless' crazy air stunts," he explained, his voice turning stern on the last bit.

I shrugged. "Nothing?" I suggested hopefully.

He frowned. "I'm not letting you endanger yourself anymore. Your safety's been jeopardized far too much in the past."

I took another cautious sip of the drink, pleasantly surprised to feel warmth spreading into my chest as I swallowed. "Yeah, but Toothless always catches me, and I'm alive. I fail to see what the problem is."

I knew I was being difficult, but honestly "what was the big deal? It wasn't like Toothless was going to pull a 'haha, sorry, bro, you on your pwn' when we were a hundred feet up one day."

"The problem is that witnessing you jump out of the saddle scared me half to death!" Stoick snapped. "I don't want to see that happening again." His eyes, his voice, his everything softened. "Hiccup, I just couldn't bear to lose you."

I forced another sip through numb, stiff lips.

\_Say anything, tell me I'm useless but never, ever tell me that again.\_

"You didn't lose me."

Stoick frowned. "Not this time."

"Not ever," I shook my head for emphasis.

He sighed. "Maybe we ought to settle this tomorrow," he admitted as I yawned. "We're all a bit tired, andâ€"

"Wait," I interrupted hesitantly. "Why don't I take you for a ride on Toothless?"

He raised a skeptical eyebrow.

"Honestly, it would help you understand. We wouldn't be doing anything dangerous, just a simple, ordinary flight. No freefalls or anything, I promise."

Stoick looked thoughtful. "I mean, I never considered riding a dragon, but maybe that might be a good idea," he conceded. "If it would give us a chance to really discuss thisâ€" And then he frowned, scowling at me. "No dangerous tricks until then."

I rolled my eyes, but I didn't try to argue. This was the best I was going to get from him for now.

"And I wanted to talk to you about something else," he began hesitantly.

I pushed my mental and emotional exhaustion back, taking a slow sip of the milk and honey mixture. "All right. I'm listening."

"Hiccup, youâ€" I mean, I'm sorry."

"I was the stupid one, I'm the one who should beâ€"

"No," he interrupted gently. "We were both in the wrong, we both should apologize. My behavior was inexcusable. I should never have grabbed you like that, not after I know and understand what you've been through."

My face flushed and I dropped my gaze to the tabletop, trying to shrug it off. "It's no big deal," I mumbled quickly.

"I saw you flinch," he whispered. "I scared you and I know it. So I'm sorry."

I swallowed and shrugged. "It's okay. It really isn't that big of a deal." I tried to stifle another yawn.

Stoick noticed. "You're tired?"

"A little," I shrugged, putting my head down on the table and closing my eyes. "I should be alright, though."

Stoick's somber demeanor broke, and I could hear a smile in his voice when he next spoke, although I didn't look up and see it. "Yeah, uh-huh. I think somebody needs to go to bed."

I gave a small groan, but before I could even move towards the stairs, he had picked me up, cradling me in his arms like he found me breakable.

"C'mon, I'll take you up."

"Stoick," I protested, my cheeks heating, my eyes still closed. "I'm too old for this!"

He brushed my bangs away from my forehead, kissing the skin gently. "Shh."

"Mph." I mumbled halfheartedly, but I allowed him to take me without too much fuss. I couldn't even keep my eyes open and they grew heavier and heavier as Stoick walked up the stairs and arrived at my bedroom door, rocking me gently back and forth in his arms.

I'm too old for this, I'm too old for this, I'm too old for this. I repeated it in my head like some sort of mantra, but I scooted closer to Stoick, leaning my ear against his chest so I could hear his heartbeat. He brushed my hair back again, settling me gently down on the bed, pulling the blanket over me. He gave me one last kiss before leaving the room, pulling the door closed behind me.

I was way too old for it, but I couldn't make myself mind it all that much. I wanted to mind it, I wanted to be independent and strong and way too Vikingly for him to carry me up to bed or rock me to sleep or some nonsense. But what I wanted more than that was to be held like that again, with affection, with love.

I surrendered myself to sleep.

## 86. Checkmate

Untold

### Chapter 86 - Checkmate

Summary: Stoick teaches Hiccup how to play chess.

\*\*A/N: Hey, guys. Not the next part to an arc, sorry :/ I'll try to get on that D: anyway, this was actually based off my own experiences xD nobody ever plays chess with me because apparently I always win xD so I was taking solace in my computerized version when I thought of this idea xD\*\*

\*\*Oh, also...I forgot to add some people's requests to the list, and I found a couple that I missed, but, so I don't miss any more, would you guys mind leaving a review telling me if you've requested anything or not and what it was? I've fulfilled requests from Guest, TheOneWithTheScar and Jayalaw, but the last two might want to repeat their requests just in case I missed them, because I know they both requested more than one thing. If you don't want to or you've forgotten your request, that's okay, too. I can do some elbow grease, I just don't want to XD\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Now, chess is pretty simple to understand, so you should pick up on it pretty quickly," Stoick announced, setting the down the black-and-white checked board.<p>

"What if I don't?" I asked, picking up a beautifully carved black horse from the pile of markers on the table.

"You're smart," Stoick replied dismissively, shrugging. "I have faith that you'll like this game. Ready to try playing it?"

"Erâ€¦okay, but one question: what's this for?" I held up the horse questioningly.

Stoick took it from me. "That's a knight. Do you want to be black or white?"

"Oh, um. Either one is fine."

He pushed the white markers towards me and took the black ones for himself. "Okay, so, to set up your markers, the rooks go on the endsâ€¦"

"The whats?"

"The castles, sorry. And the knightsâ€¦"

"You mean the horses?"

"You got it. They go beside the rooks, and then the bishopsâ€¦"

"Which areâ€¦?"

"These."

"Okay, the little runt thingies."

Stoick chuckled. "Runt thingies?"

"It's a very professional term. Next?"

"The queen comes next. You'll recognize her from the king because she's slightly shorter, and she sports a ball atop her head, whereas the king features a cross shape on his."

"Okay." Finding the two pieces that fit the description proved easy, and I put them beside the bishops.

Once Stoick explained to me the functions of the pawns and the other pieces, he asked if we were ready for a practice round.

"Sure," I shrugged. "I hope you're a patient person, though."

\* \* \*

><p>"Checkmate!"<p>

"Thirty minutes ago, you had no idea how to play this!" Stoick hissed in mock anger, and a hint of frustration that felt real. "How did you get so smart?" The fake emotions faded from his eyes, leaving behind a look of glowing pride.

I shrugged self-consciously, taking my hands off my queen. "Iâ€¦I'm not smart, not really. I'mâ€¦I'm justâ€¦"

"You're brilliant," he beamed.

I flushed. "Look, do you want to play again or not?"

"It depends. Are you going to beat me again or not?"

I grinned and shrugged. "It depends."

## 87. Vikings Don't Get Sick Part 4

Untold

### Chapter 87 - Vikings Don't Get Sick Part 4

Summary: Continuation of Vikings Don't Get Sick. In which Gobber visits Hiccup and confronts Stoick.

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, so, I guess I owe you guys an apology, huh? Sorry I let this arc fall by the wayside so badly...can you forgive me? :3 I think there'll be a part 5, 6, and maybe 7, but this arc should be rather short. I decided to take it out and work on it again, because I got sick. I think it might be the flu, but seriously - HOW DOES ONE SUSTAIN THE FLU IN AUGUST D: well, if anyone can, it's me and my stupidly weak immune system D: Anyway, I hope this finds you all in good health. Unlike me.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>When Stoick was gone, I swallowed and set the bowl of broth down on the bed beside me. "I can't wait for him to stop fussing," I moaned to nobody in particular, except if Toothless was listening.<p>

He was, and he gave a kind of dragon chuckle before settling down again. I think that laugh was supposed to signify that he didn't think Stoick would ever stop fussing over me.

"Yeah, I know," I sighed, leaning against the bed frame with a sigh, resting my aching back. It felt like the bones within were grinding together, and, suffice to say, that was not a pleasant feeling.

I lay back against the bed, sleep already threatening to tug at me once more. Yet I had done little more than sleep all day, and I didn't want to waste the daylight I had left. Although Stoick had insisted I restâ€|

I told myself this as I crawled back onto the bed, pushing the bowl of broth a little farther away. Though the first few bites had renewed my appetite, I felt nauseated all over again just thinking about having any more. I closed my eyes tiredly, thinking for a second about how much I wanted water, and then how much I wanted to lay back down and sleep for ages when the opening and shutting of the front door suddenly woke me. Stoick must have returned already.

But he wasn't alone, I realized when I heard hushed voices, more than one, coming from the living room.

"Gobber, I can't talk about this anymore," Stoick was saying quietly. "I need to go back in and check on Hiccupâ€"

"See, this is what I'm talking about!" Gobber snapped, his voice a bit louder than Stoick's. "I don't know, because I'm not there all the time, but I bet if I asked Hiccup, he would be honest. He would tell me that you're more than fulfilling your duty as his father."

"I fail to see what's wrong with that," Stoick replied coldly. His voice grew louder, and I realized he must be nearing the bedroom door.

"What's wrong with it is thatâ€¦|Stoick, you're my friend. I'm not going to censor myself just for you. You're doing your duty as father incredibly well, but while you're doing this, you're failing in your duty as chief. You neglect the village to look after Hiccup, more often than not. I love the kid, you know I do, and I see how happy he's made you these past few months, but you've just gotta learn how to balance the two. Just because you're his father now doesn't mean that you're not a chief, either. For Thor's sake, you were saying yourself that Hiccup insists that he's feeling fine!"

There was quite a bit of silence then, and guilt came crashing over me, waves upon waves of it. Gobber was right; Stoick probably was neglecting his duty as chief in favor of his duty as a father, and the thought of it just made me feel worse. It was my fault that this was happening, my stupid fault that people in the village were probably having quarrels they couldn't settle, that they probably had couples that couldn't get married because Stoick wasn't overseeing them.

Stoick finally broke the silence, breaking me out of my thoughts. "I don't wish for you to censor yourself around me." But the coldness in his voice suggested that he did. "But I warn you to speak very carefully when you speak of Hiccup around me."

"I've not said a word against the lad," Gobber said fiercely. "And you know it, too! I've said only the truth, and you just don't like hearing the truth!"

"This conversation is over," Stoick was practically yelling now, and I buried myself beneath the pillows and blankets, pretending not to hear. I had never liked loud noises.

Gobber sounded furious. "Fine."

And then the door opened, and Stoick was entering the room with a mug of water in one hand, and Gobber came trailing after him, surprising me. For two people who had just been arguing, it was amazing how well they could hide their emotions. When I peeked out at them again, I saw that Stoick looked tired and concerned when he gazed down at me, and Gobber looked a little frustrated, but mostly perfectly cheerful.

I quietly thanked Stoick when he handed me the water, but I couldn't drink it. Thirst wasn't what burned within me now; it was guilt. "I'm sorry," I mumbled, staring down into the cup, unable to even take so much as a sip.

"For what?" Stoick whispered, resting a hand on my good knee and hoisting himself up beside me, on the edge of the bed.

"Gobber's right." I couldn't look either of them in the eye. "I'm taking you away from your village, you ought to go handle them firstâ€|"

Stoick glared pointedly at Gobber before turning back to me, running his fingers through my hair. "No, Hiccup, don't talk like that. This isn't your fault, it really isn't."

"If it weren't for me, you'd still be the chief you once were. And the way Gobber talks, you were fantastic."

Gobber raised his eyebrows, as if feeling rather smug that I had sided with him on the matter. Stoick looked annoyed with him.

"This isn't about you, Hiccup," he whispered soothingly, pulling me into a hug so tight that I nearly spilled the water. "I'llâ€|I'll figure something out. This problem isn't yours to worry over."

But I was going to worry over it, and I knew it. I took a small sip from the water cup, finding that it satisfied a thirst that had faded the instant I had understood their argument. "Can't I do anything to help, though?" I persisted quietly. "I mean, short of disappear, but I can't do that. Not that I haven't tried."

Stoick's eyes softened. "Oh," he sighed, releasing me from the hug, "no, you can't do anything. And disappearing would just make things worse. The most you can do for me is get well."

"I'm still not sick," I muttered.

"Lad, you're surely runnin' a fever of at least a hundred degrees, and you look like you're about to toss your cookies," Gobber informed me, in his typical tactless manner. "How do you qualify this as not sick?"

I turned my head to sneeze. "Vikings don't get sick. I'm just under the weather."

Gobber's concerned expression broke, and he rolled his eyes. "This fever is making you delirious."

"No, this was before the fever," Stoick informed him. "And don't say things like that â€" you'll remind him of the dancing grass."

"The \_what\_?"

## 88. Thunderstorm Part XI

Untold

Chapter 88 - Thunderstorm Part XI

Summary: Continuation of 'Thunderstorm'.

\*\*A/N: I think I'm feeling a bit better today than I was yesterday. I'm recovering pretty quick, although I feel like I'm running a fever. And I found a sudden desire to write horribly overprotective Stoick, scared and sad Hiccup, douchebag Mildew and...yeah xD basically I just felt a desire to work on this arc xD so, here it is,



guys! I hope you like! Thank you for the reviews, honestly, and I'm gonna try to work on every arc in this story this week! I'm sick, I have a lot of time on my hands xD \*\*

\*\*This arc actually feels like it's sticking too close to the canon episode, honestly. BUT THE CANON ENDING OH MY GOSH :D The only thing missing WAS overprotective Stoick, which you will be seeing next chapter xD Also, I was originally going to have Mildew using stone instead of metal, but iron is proven to be heavier than some kinds of stone, and besides that, water + metal = lightning rod :D So there shall be much angst :D \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I expected Toothless to protest, but he didn't; he just flew us carefully out the window and into the storm, making my heartbeat quicken. I knew he must have sensed the sudden change in my pulse, because he gave a small, worried sound. I patted his head reassuringly. "I'm okay, bud. I'll feel better once we're away from this storm." There was no need to pretend around Toothless; he knew how scared I was of thunderstorms.<p>

He fell silent, ducking in and out of clouds to avoid sudden booms of thunder or flashes of lightning, for my sake, I supposed. There was still a strong, driving rain that threatened to push us back, and gave Toothless some difficulty in flight, but he didn't complain, just pushed ever harder through the awful weather.

We'd only been flying for about ten minutes when it happened; we hadn't even cleared the island yet, meaning the storm still raged furiously all around us. The wind threatened to rob me of my breath, but I leaned back in the saddle, taking a few gulps of rain-soaked air.

And as I leaned back to take one final breath, that's when it happened. I heard people yelling somewhere below me, yelling about the Night Fury and the runt boy, and I recognized our affectionate nicknames. I glanced down below, and my concentration broke. Toothless gave a startled warning, trying desperately not to let it happen, but he couldn't steer very well without my help. I gasped, sitting bolt upright again, pressing down on the pedal just as a streak of forked white lightning snaked down from the sky and hit Toothless' fin, finding whatever it had been looking for. It hit me at the oddest moment, just before we went down: why had it chosen Toothless' tail? If it wanted me, it could have had me â€" I was the one Thor was really angry at. But it had hit Toothless'â€|\_metal tail\_.

My mind jumped to the metal plates in the ground, but I was distracted from thinking farther about this. I could test my sudden theory later, if I needed to. I felt suddenly transported back in time, to four years ago, to another place as we went hurtling out of the sky, streaking down like a comet and hitting the ground heavily.

I landed on my arm, and I thought I heard a snap, but I didn't have time to focus on that; a voice that sounded extraordinarily like Mildew's had just yelled, "There they are!"

I shot up, looking frantically around myself as people swarmed us and

I felt the unmistakable cool metal of handcuffs on my wrists. "No!" I shrieked, trying frantically to tear my hands away. I just couldn't handle being physically restrained, not after what had happened. Not after what Alvin had done.

But the thing that really hurt, worse than the handcuffs that they forced over my struggling wrists or the nasty words they spoke about me was the fact that Mildew yelled, "Restrain the Night Fury, too! For all we know, they're both the cause of this!"

"No!" I screamed, struggling to break free, but the man who held me was strong, and he refused to let go. "Please, you can't take Toothless, please, he hasn't done anything wrong!"

Why had I not been paying attention? Why had I not just kept an eye out for lightning bolts? Why had I allowed my concentration to slip like that, long enough for me to look down at the ground and have us struck?

Mildew's pale eyes glittered as they regarded me. "At least you two will drown together." And then he motioned for the man to tug me along, for them to take Toothless away from me, and I think I might have kept screaming, kept begging Mildew not to hurt my dragon, but whatever I said, it wouldn't sway the old man. He kept stalking resolutely forward, the dragon teeth on his staff rattling. I locked eyes with Toothless as he drew farther and farther away from me, and I mouthed to him, "I will get you out of this."

Because I would. I didn't care about me â€" they could throw me off the island if they wanted to. Hell, it'd probably be best that way if they did.

But if they wanted to hurt Toothless â€" and I know this doesn't sound very impressive â€" but if they wanted to hurt him, then they had to go through me first. And though I was normally weak and incapable and all that, I could be violent if I had to be. If somebody threatened Toothless, then I definitely could be. I wouldn't even need a second thought.

I just prayed that Toothless knew that as Mildew dragged me away from him, towards the docks. He shoved me down and tied something around my neck, something heavy hanging from a cloth chain. When he allowed me up again, it clinked hard against my chest. An iron block. He had tied an iron block to my neck.

And â€" this was so selfish of me, to think of my own fate in comparison to poor Toothless' â€" but I couldn't help it. I suddenly realized what he planned to do, that he planned to throw me underwater with the iron around my neck. He planned to drown me, and this made me all the more afraid. Mildew kicked me, forcing me to roll over onto my back. "Say your prayers," he sneered.

I made one last attempt at bravery, begging him silently not to hurt Toothless. "I can't. The gods don't like me much anyway, especially not now." I gestured to the raging storm, a sudden clap of thunder making me flinch.

There was a sudden, horrible bellow of rage from somewhere above me, high above me, and I struggled to sit up, to look, but Mildew put a boot on my stomach, preventing me from doing so.

"\_What\_," and Stoick the Vast came barreling into view, gray eyes blazing with anger, "\_what the hell do you think you're doing with my son\_?"

## 89. Fix You

Untold

### Chapter 89 - Fix You

Summary: Hiccup can come to Stoick with anything...too bad he doesn't realize that yet.

\*\*A/N: Well, here's my newest thing. I shamelessly ignore my arcs and my other stories to post this. This is kind of a break from everything, and while it wasn't inspired by Coldplay's 'Fix You' I thought of the title while I listened to the song. I was like hmm...and it turned out better than I thought it would, but also much shorter. I'm considering writing a second part to this, to show that Hiccup, even with a broken arm, is still Hiccup and as such, he can be very stubborn.\*\*

\*\*Oh, speaking of ignoring stories, I better update Where Will You Go soon, huh? I listened to my unspoken playlist for that today, so I'm in the mood :D\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Silence.<p>

There was nothing but silence as Stoick wordlessly stripped me of my shirt; I didn't even try to protest. For the first time, he didn't take a few moments to stare at the scars; he regarded them expressionlessly with his lips pressed tightly together, and then he reached up and took my arm. I winced slightly when he jostled it, pretending that I couldn't feel the bones grinding together.

He didn't warn me when he began to set it; he continued to stay silent, even when I gasped and started to struggle.

He gave me a gentle but firm hand upon my chest, setting me back against my chair. "Stay still, or it's going to hurt worse."

I instantly settled back into my regular spot, staring down at my knees. I wasn't even really sure what was making him so angry, and why I felt so guilty, but something about him just seemed to suggest that I'd done something wrong, so I didn't speak until he did.

And when he did break the thick, heavy silence, I couldn't tell if he was speaking to me or not; he was just kind of muttering furiously under his breath. "What you were thinkingâ€|you practically show up with a new injury every weekâ€|carelessâ€|irresponsibleâ€|thoughtlessâ€|lucky you didn't break your \_neck\_â€|"

I squirmed guiltily as he thankfully took his hands off my arm and began to fashion a splint for it. "I'm sorry," I mumbled, thoroughly abashed, my eyes still fixed on my knees.

"I don't want you to be sorry." Stoick met my gaze briefly as he began to wrap my arm. "I want assurance that this won't happen again."

"Oh," I said, relieved that he was asking something I could readily give. "Of course not, Toothless and I really got the hang of it that time, so there shouldn't be any more accidents."

"No, Hiccup." His expression was suddenly stern. "I don't mean that I want you to stop showing up with broken bonesâ€"

"This is only the first time," I muttered, but his glare sent me scuttling safely back into the corner of silence until his anger abated.

"I just want you to stop the source of the injuries altogether," he concluded, mercifully ending the glare and turning his attention back to my arm. "I want you to stop taking reckless risks."

"They aren't reckless!" I began hotly.

"Then explain why they always end in you getting hurt," he snapped.

I dropped my eyes back to my knees. "Maybe I'm just stupid?" My voice came out colder than I meant it to. "Maybe you should just give up on me."

"No." Speaking of voices, his was uncharacteristically quiet. "No. You're not stupid, Hiccup."

I looked up to make sure it was really him speaking. Well, his mouth was moving, anyway.

"You have stupid ideas," he added, as if feeling the need for clarification. "And you seem to love to execute them, but you are not stupid."

My cheeks reddened and I looked away from him as he continued wrapping my arm. He didn't speak again, and I didn't take it upon myself to break the silence. I couldn't think of anything to say, although I did glance up in surprise when he finished wrapping my arm and instantly moved onto my left one, the good one. He dabbed on some sharp-smelling ointment with an even sharper sting, and I instinctively smacked at his hand.

Stoick scowled. "I'm trying to help you."

"You're hurting," I growled.

"Deal with it," he replied without sympathy, all the tenderness from moments ago lost. He grabbed at my arm again, lathering more ointment onto the open skin.

I winced, but I made no more protests, and I didn't try to pull away again. It was clear I was only making him angry every time I spoke.

Wellâ€|angrier.

"You need to be more careful," he told me sternly, rising to his feet. "You could have gotten a much worse injury from this."

I tried to meet his gaze, failed miserably, and contented myself with staring at the scuffed wooden floor. "You know, you didn't have to help me. I could have handled it myself."

Stoick threw me a disbelieving look. "You could have handled a broken arm"

"It'd work best that way," I interrupted him before he could finish. "Then you wouldn't be angry for having to patch me up, and I wouldn't have to look weak."

His mouth actually dropped open, and he just stared at me. I had a feeling that maybe I had been a little too perceptive in why he was mad, so for a few moments, I sat there in silence, fidgeting uncomfortably.

Finally, when it seemed he wasn't going to speak " seriously, how did I manage to render \_Stoick the Vast\_ speechless? " I coughed and asked weakly, "Well|that \_is\_ what you're angry about, right?"

He shook his head before seemingly regaining his ability of speech. "I|just|Hiccup. I'm not angry."

"You kept snapping at me," I reminded him.

"You scared me," he corrected. "You told me this morning that you were going out on a flight with Toothless, and you come back forty minutes later looking like death, with one arm bent grossly out of shape, and the other arm bleeding. How did you think I was going to react?"

I considered. "Well, actually, I expected you to just tell me that Vikings don't feel pain and they don't get broken bones, and send me upstairs to do the actual medical stuff myself " I got really good at that when I was about eleven, because nobody else would help me and I kept falling off Toothless and stupid stuff like that. But no, wow. You surprised me. You took it way better than I would have thought, and you even helped splint my arm and everything. So, yeah, really, you actually reacted way better than expected." I teetered off into silence to find that I seemed to have struck him speechless again.

He took a couple seconds to collect himself. "Hiccup|I|you|Vikings don't what?"

"Oh, get broken bones or feel pain," I answered. "What's the matter? Yak got your tongue?"

"No|I|just|I|well|Hiccup|I'm sorry."

My eyebrows flew up; I could feel them move on my forehead. "What for? It's not you who should be sorry, Stoick, it's me " you're just the unfortunate person who has to deal with my stupid, injured ass."

Stoick knelt beside my chair again. "No. Hush. Don't say a word, don't even think like that."

"Think like what?"

He took my chin gently in his hands. "Don't think for one second that you're a burden to me. You're everything to me, you're wonderful. Don't let yourself think that I'm annoyed by you, or angry that I have to deal with you."

I drew in a breath, trying to avoid his gaze, because his words made me kind of uncomfortable, but I didn't really have anywhere else to look. "Iâ€¦it's justâ€¦that'd be the most believable reason, so that's what I went with."

"I know that Alvin treated you wrongly," he whispered. "That whole island did, in fact â€" everyone on there was just sick." Stoick's face twisted like he'd just bitten into a very sour lemon. "But I want you to know that I will never treat you like he did. I will never hurt you, I will never hit you. I will never tell you all those ridiculous things about what Vikings don't do, and I will never, ever make you deal with anything alone. You can come to me for anything."

I averted my eyes again, finding myself unable to look at him. He didn't try to lift my chin any higher and for that, I was grateful; I could feel hot tears pricking at my eyes with how much I wanted his words to be true.

He brushed my hair away from my forehead, pressing a quick kiss to the skin. "I mean it. Broken bones, bruises, cuts, scrapesâ€¦or tears, or nightmares, or memories. And I will try to fix you."

## 90. One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

Untold

### Chapter 90 - One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

Summary: With Hiccup, it's just a matter of one step forward, two steps back.

**\*\*A/N: Okay, I've got some stuff to say.\*\***

**\*\*This was not solely my idea. This was inspired by an RP I did with one of my friends. We were bored and she, for some crazy reason, really likes the To Be Loved the Way You Love Me AU, so I was roleplaying that with her and yep. Angst happened. Along with this. Not the exact same plotline, but eh. \*\***

**\*\*Please review, guys :3 I sound greedy, but I mean it when I say that if you don't review, I get really upset because I think nobody likes it. \*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I collapsed on the ground with a sigh, shuddering with cold and drawing nearer to the fire. It had been a long and frigid day in the smithy, with Mrs. Thorston coming in and making barbed comments about

me being an Outcast again. I wasn't in the mood for much more than warming up a bit by the fire and then crawling into bed.<p>

Stoick glanced over at me questioningly, looking up momentarily from the crackling flames. "Are you alright?" The concern in his eyes and voice would never cease to amaze me.

I nodded, trying to tell my body that I was officially away from the bitter cold, and it could stop shivering now. "Just tired, is all."

"No, Hiccup, something is bothering you," Stoick persisted, setting the metal poker down and drawing nearer to me. "Will you please just tell me what it is?"

I looked away from him, regretting that I hadn't slipped upstairs when I'd had the chance. "I really don't feel like talking right now."

I heard him give a quiet sigh. "Alright. I won't ask again."

There was silence for a bit, just the hissing and popping flames making any sound.

"I'm not allowed to ask?"

"You can, but I probably won't answer."

"Can I try and make you feel better?"

I shrugged. Toothless had been trying to cheer me up all day. "I don't think anything is gonna make me feel better but some sleep, but you can try. Provided your method of trying doesn't involve anything too tiring. I'm pretty beat."

Stoick watched me for a minute or two before his face broke out into a sudden smile, one that I wasn't sure I liked. It wasn't just playful; it was downright mischievous. "So I can try?"

"I don't know if I like what you're thinking," I replied nervously. "I don't even know what you're thinking, but I don't like it."

I was right: I didn't like it. He reached over and began tickling my stomach, eliciting several laughs as I tried to push him away. "No! Stop!" I had to admit though, that the laughter was helping a lot; I already felt a bit lighter. Toothless hadn't tried tickling, although that probably wasn't far down on his list; he was watching us with clear amusement, as if debating between joining in or just enjoying the show. I was going to force-feed him eel if he didn't intervene on my behalf.

Stoick grinned at me. "But you're laughing," he pointed out.

"Great point, Sherlock," I began, but this comment earned me his fingers moving down to my ribs, and I was laughing too hard to continue. "Quit it! P-please!"

"Why should I?" he teased, but the brief reprieve I gained from my begging was enough; I managed to wriggle out of his grasp, gasping for breath after the unexpected attack. He made another teasing grab

for me, not like he really wanted to get me again, more just to scare me, I think. My eyes widened in fear, and I tried to scoot away, but the issue was, I was trapped against the wall. He caught both my hands in one of his in an iron grip and laughed lightly at my expression.

That's probably when things took a turn for the worse. My eyes turned ever wider, but not from fear of being tickled. He reached for my stomach again, but I raised my good foot and kicked him as hard as I could, successfully getting his shoulder. He collapsed in fake pain "or at least, I hope it was fake pain, because I did kick him kind of hard.

Stoick moaned something about his shoulder, and how he would never be the same, but I wasn't listening; I sprang from my spot on the floor, racing for the stairs, my heart pounding in my chest. \_Don't let him get that close again. Never. No one. Get away. Get to your room. Lock the door.\_

I made it to the second floor before he even noticed I was gone, and I made it to the bedroom, slamming the door shut and leaning heavily against it, sinking down to my butt. I buried my face in my knees, listening to my heart trying to resume its regular pattern, but the sudden adrenaline rush left me feeling oddly breathless.

By the time I'd managed to regain the regular pattern, Stoick was knocking on the door. "Hiccup? What's wrong? What happened?"

"Nothing! Go away!" I was scared that my voice was trembling from how afraid I had been; would Stoick have hurt me, if I had let him? If I hadn't fought, would he have hurt me, with my hands pinned like that?

"Hiccup!" I heard a thump somewhere on the other side of the door, and Toothless moaned softly, scratching at the wood. I tried to cover my ears, because if I heard my dragon begging to be let in, I was going to break and open up for him, and then Stoick could see my face and ask me questions and I didn't want to see him right then.

"Please tell me what's wrong."

"Go away. I don't want to talk to you."

"Tell me what happened," he pleaded.

"No."

"Please just let me in."

"Go away."

"Okay." He sounded so unbearably sad when he spoke, but he was giving me the space I needed.

I squeezed my eyes shut, replaying the scene in my head, him grabbing my hands and "You were going to hurt me, weren't you?"



"What?" Stoick sounded less sad but baffled now. "What are you talking about?"

"You pinned my hands."

"Yes," he admitted. "But why would thatâ€¦lead toâ€¦ohâ€¦Hiccup, I'm sorry, I didn't thinkâ€¦but I had no intentions like that, I promiseâ€¦"

I hugged my knees tighter. "I don't like being restrained." My voice came out much smaller than I meant it to.

"No, of course not," Stoick sighed. "I'm so sorry, Hiccup, truly. I didn't think it would bother you, Iâ€¦I thought you knew." He sounded slightly hurt when he spoke next. "I thought you trusted me."

"You thought wrong." I tried to make my tone hard to cover up the shaky quality. "If you're really determined not to give up on me, then you should know that it's one step forward, two steps back. I'm not ever going to trust you."

There was a silence.

"But you ran here." His voice was quiet, hopeful.

"What?" I didn't understand what he meant.

"The first few times I crossed a line with you, you ran out of the house, you were so upset. This time, you ran here instead."

I looked down at the wooden floor beneath me, tracing patterns within the boards. "But I still ran. Just give it up, please, Stoick, I'm never going to trust you, not ever, so don't waste your time on me! I'm hopeless!"

He had never, ever used my name before. He called me 'Hiccup'. He'd called me 'son' and 'boy' and even 'lad'. But he had never used my full name like he did now. "Don't you even finish that \_sentence\_, Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third."

I shrank again instantly, even though I knew he couldn't get to me through the door. I still flinched instinctively. "I'm sorry." My voice was barely above a whisper. "I'm sorry, but I really am hopeless. Soâ€¦you know, if you want to give up on me or something, I won't blame you."

"I'm never giving up on you. Not if it takes a thousand years for you to trust me. I'm still not giving up. Because I know that words don't mean anything to you, that promising to never hurt you won't make up for anything. I know that. But I'll prove it to you, each and every day, and one day, you'll realize it for yourself. I'm really not going to hurt you. You can trust me, and one day, you'll see that."

I blinked away the gathering tears, trying my hardest to think of what to say. I couldn't really think of anything, any way to tell him what I wanted to, so I just stood and opened up the door.

Untold

## Chapter 91 - I'm With You Part XXII

Summary: Continuation of 'I'm With You'.

**\*\*A/N: ATTENTION \*\***

**\*\*PLEASE READ \*\***

**\*\*ARE YOU FAINT-HEARTED? ARE YOU EASILY UPSET? ARE YOUR FEELS MADE OF GLASS, AND CAN THEY BROKEN VERY EASILY? If your answer to any of those questions is 'yes' I urge you not to read the next chapter I post, and to accept this as the ending to the I'm With You arc. The next chapter is the real ending. \*\***

\* \* \*

><p><em>Hiccup was stronger than anybody had ever given him credit for, stronger than even I had given him credit for.<em>

\_I had thought that an infected wrist was his death sentence. I thought that he wouldn't even last the night. I'd thought for certain that something terrible was going to happen when Gothi confirmed Gobber's suspicions and said that yes, his wrist was infected. I stayed with him all through the night, brushing his hair back from his forehead feverishly and whispering soothing words in his ears, trying to calm him down when his fever rose. He would thrash and squirm about in the bed, tears streaming down his cherry red cheeks, but when I gently put a hand upon his copper head, he stilled instantly. He curled into a tiny ball, his fingers latching around mine, and he wouldn't let go. That was okay. I didn't want him to. I couldn't imagine wanting to do anything more than holding his tiny hand all night long. \_

\_I hadn't even closed my eyes, terrified that when I next opened them, Hiccup's body would be nothing but a shell, that his soul would have kissed the world goodbye in the night. But I needn't have worried. I sat up with him, and I stroked his hair gently, and I cleaned his stump tenderly, and I quietly loved him and prayed to every deity I knew that he would be okay. It seems almost miraculous that we have come this far. Just a few weeks ago, he was sobbing in my arms, his wrist was naught but a stump. He was completely broken.

—

\_But he is stronger than Alvin, than Gobber, than the whole of Berk has given him credit for. There was a roaring bet going on, that first week, of when he would die, of when we would need to prepare his funeral barge. Snotlout was so terrified by the idea; he never laughed at any of the jokes they made about Hiccup, and he wouldn't visit him anymore, either. My only excuse for this is that he must have thought that it would hurt too much, to care about Hiccup so deeply only to lose him. But that kind of reasoning is not sensible, and there is some kind of driving need, as a parent, to stay with your child, no matter how painful it is. Even if you stay awake the whole night, scared to close your eyes for fear that they will greet death in the instant that you're not looking, you have to stay with them. So I stayed up with Hiccup that night, and I sang lullabies to him, and I told him how much I loved him, and I begged him not to

leave me, and something in my words must have gotten through to him, because he opened his eyes shortly after. He smiled at me and whispered, "It's alright. I'm alright." \_

\_When he next sank into sleep, I felt comforted, because I knew that he was telling the truth. The world looked like a beautiful place that night, beautiful and peaceful and quiet, just the moon and the stars looking down upon me as I held my little boy's hand in the darkness. I smiled down at him. "Yes," I whispered to him, "You are alright. You're perfect." I still didn't sleep, of course, but I stayed right there beside him, feeling like I needed to.\_

\_When he awoke the next morning, he wasn't completely healed, but his fever had disappeared overnight, his cheeks were no longer deathly pale from illness and little sunlight, no longer slightly green from his body's denial of food, no longer flushed bright red from fever. He looked so perfect in that moment, sitting up in the bed and smoothing his flyaway auburn hair, smiling at me so widely, looking so at peace. His expression mirrored my heart. We were both so grateful for the glorious morning. I took his hand and hugged him, and he allowed me to. He was relaxed and still a bit tired in my arms, but he wasn't rigid like he had been the first time I'd hugged him, and he wasn't broken, like he had been the last time, and this just made me hug him ever tighter. I loved him so much that my heart ached with it. \_

"\_Please tell me you're getting your money's worth," he croaked, his voice a bit scratchy and hoarse, but beautiful, because it still worked. He winced slightly and put a hand to his throat, but I couldn't even make sense of his words.\_

"\_What are you talking about?" \_

"\_I've been hearing people coming through here all week," he informed me. "All trying to find out when I was going to kick the bucket, placing bets on my funeral, stuff like that. Tell me you were betting that I was going to live, and that you're going to get your money's worth from it." \_

\_I shook my head silently, but I couldn't respond in words, because considering the alternative hurt too much. He seemed to realize that he wasn't amusing me, only saddening me, because he carefully averted his gaze.\_

"\_You might want to try and get some more rest â€" you're going to have so many visitors once people realize that you're alright. Things looked pretty dark there for a bit." \_

\_Hiccup shook his head, a slight smile playing at the corners of his lips. "No, I don't want any more rest. I've been sleeping for way too long â€" can I get up and move around?" \_

\_It seemed incredible that he was able to move around so well, and even when Toothless became thoroughly overjoyed and began licking him like crazy, it was incredible that he was able to withstand being pinned to the ground, rather painfully. He merely smiled up at his dragon, trying to protect himself from the licks, but laughing all the same. \_

\_And even, a few days more, when he began feeling better, it seemed

incredible that he was able to do everything he always did, every morning. Waking up, rising from the bed, play-wrestling with Toothless, getting dressed, washing himself, bandaging his stump. Why, it was only a few weeks and he was back in the forge with Gobber, the same bouncing ball of energy he had always been, a bright smile on his lips, an undying sparkle in his green eyes. It was incredible that he was recovering so quickly. He was so much stronger than most people gave him credit for. He was tougher than I ever thought possible. In the end, he was the strongest of them all, even if he didn't realize it.\_

\_He still dealt with pain, and he still cried sometimes, confiding in me about the brutal torture Alvin had put him through, but he was okay. He was living and breathing, and happier than I had ever seen him. And it was just so incredible that he was like that, that he was my son and that he was a happy boy. The village whispered for quite a bit about him, but they eventually accepted him into their midst, which was even more incredible. Berk had been known for its prejudice against Outcasts for a hundred years or more. It was so wonderful that he was still there, solidly beside me. Who cared if he came with emotional baggage, who cared if he wasn't as big as the other Viking boys? He was my Viking boy. He was my little Hiccup, and I loved him with everything in me. \_

## 92. I'm With You Part XXIII

Untold

Chapter 92 - I'm With You Part XXIII

Summary: Continuation of 'I'm With You'.

**\*\*A/N: THIS IS THE REAL ENDING OF 'I'M WITH YOU'. AND THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE TO TURN BACK. I URGE YOU TO DO SO. \*\***

**\*\*If you're tough enough to handle this, however, please review and tell me - this is so sadistic - but tell me whether or not you cried? :D please? I'm aiming to rip out the reader's soul with this ending :D \*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I barely notice the ash and smoke stinging my eyes â€" they are too full of tears for me to notice much more. I gaze out across the sea, thinking of what could have been, if onlyâ€|if only this hadn't happened. How could fate be so cruel? How could this have happened? Gothi said his wrist was infected only last week. How could things have changed so fast?<p>

Sixteen years. I waited sixteen years to get my son back, and he came back, and he was beautiful, and my world was beautiful, but now everything is ugly and dark and I hate it, and I just want to cry and damn it if the village is watching. I lower my head, feeling the tears leaking out. The really pathetic thing is, I didn't listen. Right up until the very end, I refused to listen to Hiccup. He tried to break it to me gently, but I never listened, and now nothing can bring him back.

Thinking of him, his name, remembering his face, it all hurts, but

he's the only thing I can think about, and trying to force my thoughts down a different path is completely hopeless.

"But at least," Gobber's voice cuts into my thoughts, breaking me out of my reverie. His tone is choked with tears, but it's no comfort that I'm not the only one crying. It's no comfort at all. "At least when he died, he felt safe and he felt loved. At least Hiccup died with Toothless by his side."

The dragon in question gives a long, low croon of sadness when his rider's name is mentioned. I feel just the same way. I feel like giving the same kind of noise, like collapsing on my knees on the sand. What could have happened, if this hadn't?

The tears start falling faster, rolling down my cheeks and into my beard, hitting the tiny grains of sand beneath me. Who cares for a grain of sand? I don't care for the sand. I don't care for anything in this world, this cruel and dark hell that took my only son away from me for the second time.

I can still see him, in my mind's eye, breathing shallowly in that wooden bed, his fists clenched tight around the blankets. I remember him looking up at me with dull green eyes. Even the color in his hair was gone, by that point.

"Stoick," I can still hear his tiny voice choking out the words. He tried to sit up, but he couldn't get up far enough; the pain was too great. My sobs were the only thing in the room. Just the night before, I had been cradling him in my arms, calming him after a nightmare, singing him that stupid lullaby about how he was my sunshine. He had seemed calm then. What had changed?

"Dad." \_

The word caught my attention far more effectively than my name; I looked up at him through my tears, and he reached for my hand with his good one, and I just couldn't quit staring at the sad stump. "Please don't cry, Dad." \_

I knelt down next to his bedside, not even bothering to try and keep the tears back anymore. "You're gonna be okay. You're gonna be fine."

\_

"No, I'm not." His voice was perfectly calm; he wasn't being dramatic, just stating the truth. I denied that truth right up until the end. "I'm not going to be okay, but Dad, please don't cry for me. Don't feel bad for me, I'm going to a place where Alvin can't hurt me anymore." His lips twitched, offering me a weak smile.

"No, Hiccup," I tried to choke out the words through my sobs, "no, please, son, please— you can't leave me, you're not leaving me—"

\_

"It's okay," he whispered, taking my hand, clutching my fingers with surprising strength. "You don't get it, you'll never get it, but this— this is all I've ever wanted." \_

He closed his eyes, and I was so terrified that he was never going to open them again that my tears began falling faster, and I began shaking him in my fright. "No! Hiccup, don't you dare close your

eyes! Don't surrender, Hiccup! Fight it, fight it, please!" \_

\_He slowly opened them again, blinking up at me and smiling. "I don't want to go like this." I didn't notice it before then, but he had tears in his eyes, and his smile was bittersweet. "I don't want to go knowing that I'm hurting you." \_

"\_Then don't go at all." I pleaded.\_

"\_Don't make me stay, Dad." \_

"\_Don't go," I begged. "Oh, please, Hiccup, I know you can fight it, you're the strongest person I knowâ€" \_

"\_I want to go," he frowned slightly. "I'm supposed to. I'll feel better once I go. No more pain. No more tears. I won't be hunted by Alvin anymore." \_

"\_Don't leave me," I sobbed.\_

"\_Dad, honestly, I'm leaving either way. I don't have the power to stop death. I'm going, and I can spend my last few days fighting, or I can go peacefully." \_

\_I choked over my own tears, trying to wipe them away so I could see his face. "Itâ€|it isn't fair," I choked through my sobs. "It isn't fairâ€|I only just now got you backâ€|why do you have to leave so soon?" \_

"\_I'm sorry." He looked truly apologetic. "I'd like to stay with you, I really would." \_

\_For a few moments, we sat there in silence as I cried over him, wetting his tunic with my tears. He gazed distantly up at the ceiling before finally saying, "Dad, do you know that song you were singing before I fell asleep last night?" \_

\_I nodded uncertainly.\_

"\_Will you sing it for me again? I really liked it." \_

"\_Of course," I managed quietly. "Of course I will." I began to brush back his hair, readying myself to sing. Maybe if I sang to him, it would convince him to stay. He smiled at me, and a few tears trickled from his eyes. \_

"\_Don't cry for me anymore, okay?" he whispered. "You don't realize it, but I'm happy. This is all I've ever wanted, Daddy. All I've ever wanted is to be loved the way you love me." \_

\_I started crying again, and I couldn't stop this time, because I couldn't stand that he was leaving me. I needed him to stay here with me. I needed him, but he was leaving me. I kept trying to tug him back, but this only upset him, because I was trying to bring him back to a world that had hurt him so many times over.\_

"\_Don't cry," he insisted, even though he was. "Don't cry â€" I'm happy. Just sing to me. I still have some time. I'm here. I'm still here. I'm with you. And I'm not leaving." \_

\_I composed myself after a bit, still clinging to hope. I wasn't going to try and tug him back. I was just going to let him go, because maybe that way, he'd come back to me willingly. \_

"\_You are my sunshine, \_

\_My only sunshine.\_

\_You make me happy when skies are gray. \_

\_You'll never know, dear, how much I love you. \_

\_Please don't take my sunshine awayâ€| " \_

I hate this world, because it took my sunshine away.

### 93. To Hear that I Love Him

Untold

#### Chapter 93 - To Hear that I Love Him

Summary: Stoick's thoughts and feelings on Hiccup's prosthetic.

\*\*A/N: I sincerely apologize for what I did to you all last chapter xD I know this wasn't a request from TheOneWithTheScar, but it's dedicated to her anyway, because it sounds like she's having a pretty crappy week, and I know she adores Hiccup/Stoick father/son. My thoughts go with you, girl, and I wish you the best of luck :) Erm, to the rest of you, sorry about shattering your hearts xD\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I watch him.<p>

I look at him even when I don't want to, even when I know it's going to break my heart, because I have to, because I can't look away and let him struggle through this on his own. The way he spoke to me when he woke up, he made it sound like nobody, save Toothless, had ever been nice to him, had ever been there for him. And I was determined not to make him suffer through one more thing alone. I was going to be there for him this time, even if I hadn't been there for sixteen years.

So I watched him, and I held out my arms to steady him when he stumbled, and I tried to catch him when he started falling. But it hurt, it hurt so badly because he seemed angry with himself whenever he had to lean on me. He didn't want to have to lean on anyone, not even his own father, who was there for him to lean on. He wanted to be independent.

And I understood that â€" I knew that he was sixteen, not two, and that he could look after himself just fine. But it hurt me, the fact that he thought he had to. And it hurt me to see him putting so much pressure on himself, trying to fall back to his ordinary routine just days after waking up. It hurt my heart, it tore me to shreds to watch him struggling, to watch him wince or to hear him cry out whenever he put too much weight on his bad leg, whenever he tripped and fell

thanks to the metal contraption.

And it infuriated me, too, infuriated me that Alvin had dared to take another thing from my son. My little boy was all scarred and broken and bruised thanks to Alvin the Treacherous, but the man couldn't even stop there, couldn't leave it at that. He had to do one more thing, scar him one more time. And now, whenever I helped him clean the stump, I felt an overwhelming urge to pour out all the affection that I had not allowed myself to feel since the day he was born.

And every time, I resisted. Because I could see in his eyes that he wasn't ready, that such unconditional and unstoppable love would only scare him away, not make him feel safer or better. Affection would not take away his pain.

So I was going to hold back, and I wouldn't tell him how much I loved him until he was ready to hear it.

I finished changing the bandages on his stump, meeting his green eyes, so like his mother's, for just a split second before dropping my gaze back to the pristine white gauze wrapped around what had once been a fully working left leg. "You're free to go. Be careful â€" don't put too much weight on it! Sit down when it starts toâ€"

But he had already jumped from his chair and hobbled out the door, leaning heavily on Toothless, calling his thanks to me. And I couldn't help thinking that he had left to avoid that, to avoid hearing my concern for him put into words.

I sighed, gathering up the used bandages to dispose of them. No, he was not ready to hear that I loved him just yet.

## 94. Gentle

Untold

### Chapter 94 - Gentle

Summary: Astrid's tough, fearless, and all things Viking. But she can be gentle, too. Done by request.

**\*\*A/N:** This is dedicated to Wiki Sorcerer, because they requested it. I don't even know if they read this fic anymore, but I sincerely hope they do, because otherwise this chapter is a waste. I bet they got tired of waiting for me to write this xD it doesn't focus ENTIRELY on just Astrid discovering Hiccup's scars - there's a bit of Hiccstrid in there, too, as I imagine that this is set a bit after To Be Loved the Way You Love Me, but before Starlight, Star Bright - so Hiccup is just discovering that he kind of sort of has feelings for Astrid, and just trying to fit in with the teens - who kind of make it easy for him, might I add xD because Snotlout and the twins are super impressed that he comes from Outcast Island and lived to tell the tale, and Fishlegs loves him because they're nerdy dragon buddies, and Astrid didn't really like him at first, but he's growing on her. (Of course he is, she makes her attraction quite obvious in this chapter.) **\*\***

**\*\*Anyway,** I know Astrid is a bit OOC, so please don't leave me mean reviews about it, just please tell me what you think about the rest



of it. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I could hear Snotlout whooping and yelling for joy in the clouds far above me; I could tell that those yells were mostly from relief that he was still alive. When he finally landed in the arena once more, looking windswept, greatly relieved and still a bit frightened, I turned to the other teens, all watching us with skeptical looks on their faces. "Alright, who wants to go next?"<p>

Snotlout swung his legs over the side of the dragon's neck, and the Monstrous Nightmare lowered himself to the ground to let his rider off. He dusted himself off as though there was nothing to it, and I rolled my eyes, though I couldn't help but smile at how much he was showing off, mostly for the girls, I was sure.

However, in response to my question, the other teens instantly stepped back nervously. Fishlegs became very interested in a pebble on the arena floor, Astrid crossed her arms and just raised an eyebrow at me, and Ruffnut and Tuffnut pointed to each other. I tried not to look irritated. "C'mon, if Snotlout can do it, anyone can!"

My cousin glared at me, offended, and opened his mouth to retort, but Astrid stepped forward, arms still folded, but looking a little bit willing. "You have a point there."

"Great!" I said brightly, clasping my hands together and looking at her gratefully. "Do you want to go for a ride on Toothless first? It'll be easier than riding your own dragon, because with your own, you'll have to be the one steering, and on Toothless, I'll be there the whole time." I smiled hopefully at her. This speech had worked with Snotlout, and I crossed my fingers behind my back on it working with her. If Snotlout hadn't flown firstly with me, I was betting that he would have panicked up in the sky, and I didn't want that to happen to Astrid, either.

Her hands slid down to her curvy hips, and she looked me up and down for a second. "If you try and persuade me to jump out of the saddle, I'm breaking your arms."

"Oh, no, nothing like that," I waved her concerns aside easily. "No, whenever it's somebody's first flight, we just do some simple gliding, it won't be anything scary. I promise." I offered her a smile to hopefully reassure her, but she didn't seem very reassured. She'd probably witnessed me jumping out of the saddle a time or two. I climbed up onto Toothless, and offered her my hand to help her up.

"I don't need that," she told me dismissively. "I can get up myself."

"Well, I wasâ€¦I was being polite," I mumbled, my face burning as I withdrew my hand again.

"C'mon, bud, let's go nice and slow," I coaxed my dragon, once Astrid had gotten settled somewhere behind me. I could feel her shin touching the back of my good knee, and I tried to turn my thoughts elsewhere. "It's her first flight, bud, don't scare her."

Toothless gave me a low croon, blinking innocently up at me. I rolled my eyes. That dragon was anything but innocent. "Let's get going, c'mon."

Toothless took off at a bit of a run, snapping his wings to his sides when he reached the arena entrance and fanning them out again once we were in the open air. He spread them wide and took off as I fanned out the fake tail fin, pressing hard on the pedal to keep us aloft. The moment we were in the sky, Astrid grabbed frantically at my waist, gasping in shock and sudden fear.

"It's okay," I assured her gently, nudging Toothless into a slower ascent. "It's okay. We're just gonna go once around the arena, and then I'll drop you back off onto solid ground."

"Okay." Her voice was surprisingly small.

"Don't be afraid, Astrid. You're safe up here. Toothless would never let you fall."

Toothless was being surprisingly obedient; on Snotlout's first flight, he had done a rather wild loop-de-loop to scare the older boy, but maybe he sensed Astrid's fear and was taking pity on her.

I started to ease her into our lap around the arena, hoping she'd notice something other than the fact that she was farther up than she'd bargained for. To my relief, she smiled a bit upon seeing the fantastic cloud shapes, all tinted pink and burnt purple from dusk. She reached out and ran her fingers through misty vapor, gazing about herself in wonder.

"It's amazing, isn't it?" I whispered when I saw her putting her hands back down.

"Yes," Astrid agreed faintly. "It is." I felt her suddenly, her hands finding my ribcage and resting there. I went rigid in the saddle, unused to the feel of human contact. When I was this high up, it was normally just me and my dragon. I hadn't taken Snotlout this high.

Her leg nudged mine again, and my thoughts jumped to how close she was.

"Hiccupâ€|" her hands slid off my sides, down to my hips. Girls mostly avoided me like the plague, so to have Astrid, the prettiest girl on Berk, willingly flying on Toothless with me, and willingly sitting this close in the saddle, and willingly touching me, was not helping my concentration.

"Yes?" I forced words through my suddenly rather dry mouth, twisting a bit to look at her.

I guess I expected her to talk about how beautiful it was up here; I had been awestruck the first time I'd flown Toothless, too. But that wasn't what she started in on.

"You'reâ€|you're skinny."

I blinked, surprised. "Er, yes. I am. I'm not really a proper Viking,

I don't have the build for it, and my body just likes to reject any and all calories I get throughout the day. I think it has something to do with Toothless, and how much I burn off the calories while flying him. Why?"

"No, I mean—I can feel your ribs." Astrid's hands went back to my sides, and I shifted uneasily.

"Yes, I know you can feel my ribs, will you please put my shirt back down? You lifted it up by accident"

"Oh. Sorry." She reached down to the hem of my tunic, brushing by my hipbone on the way there. And then she did it again.

"Hiccup!"

"What?!" I twisted again. "We've gone way past the arena by now, do you mind letting me concentrate?"

"You've got scars!"

"Yes, I know."

"You've got tons of them!"

"Yes, I know I do."

"Why do you have so many?!"

"Outcast Island's a rough place to live, now do you mind? I'm trying to get us back to the arena!" I pressed down on the tail fin again, swerving suddenly to avoid a sea stack and squinting around in the rapidly falling darkness for the metal dome marking our destination.

"You—you just don't look the type to be in battle," she pressed, determined.

"I'm not," I replied shortly. "Those aren't battle scars."

"Then—?"

I jerked Toothless around so suddenly that we nearly crashed into another rock formation out on the water. "Alvin the Treacherous got off on whipping me, alright?! Leave me alone!"

Astrid fell silent after that; she didn't speak until we were almost at the arena again. "I'm sorry, Hiccup." She rested a gentle hand on my arm, and there was a surprising tenderness in her tone. "I—I didn't know. I thought that you just left Outcast Island to"

"I didn't leave." I cut her off, knowing I was being rude, but not caring. "I escaped. And it's fine. Seeing a weakling like me covered in scars is going to raise some questions, I know it will."

Again, Astrid didn't reply. She put a hand comfortingly on my hip again before, incredibly, giving me a gentle hug around the waist. I froze, unsure how to respond, going completely rigid in the saddle again. What did I do? How exactly did I pry her off me? I mean, I'm not going to pretend that it wasn't nice, because her chin was

resting on my shoulder and she smelled really nice and her arms were really warm and soft"

Toothless roared in alarm, jerking me out of my thoughts and making me realize that we had started plummeting towards the ground. I clicked the pedal frantically, the tail fin snapped open, and we just barely skimmed the water. He gave me a reproachful look and a slap on the cheek with his ear as we rose back up. I rubbed the spot he had slapped guiltily. "Sorry, bud."

In the sudden fall, Astrid had released me, and I was turning through the arena entrance when she said, "Hey, Hiccup?"

"Mm?"

"You asked me if I minded letting you concentrate"

"Yeah, so?" We landed safely on the stone floor, but she didn't get off.

"Sorry for distracting you. I imagine something like that would make people forget to steer"

I flushed. "You weren't I mean" She didn't understand exactly what I had meant by that. "Um you're fine. Apology accepted."

## 95. Witness Part 2

Untold

### Chapter 95 - Witness Part 2

Summary: Continuation to the 'Witness' arc.

\*\*A/N: Hello, there! Well, I'm posting two chapters to this arc tonight, because I decided that I haven't written on it in so long that I would give you guys two chapters to make up for that :D and it's also my pathetic attempt at bribing you guys, because I'm at 791 reviews and I really want to hit 800. I don't deserve it, I don't even deserve these 791 xD this story is nowhere near good enough, but I'm so glad and so grateful and so hoping to hit it. Just 9 tiny reviews is all it would take...I mean, if I don't hit it, you guys are still awesome :D thank you for all the reviews already. 791, wow... \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I didn't have long to wonder who Tessa and Halfdan were. I stayed beside the small child, knowing I couldn't protect or comfort him, but I didn't want to leave him to sleep. When Hiccup awoke, just after sunrise, he sat up and yawned, rubbing at his eyes with his tiny knuckles. He frowned, glancing up at the sky, at the twittering birds started their morning song, and I saw the memories dawning in his eyes. He picked himself up from the ground, ran his fingers through his hair, dusted off his clothes and started for the edge of the trees once more.<p>

He hadn't gone very far in, so before long, he was once again within

the village, smiling hopefully at a few people as he passed. None of them smiled back; in fact, a couple other kids drew away as he passed, as if Hiccup had some contagious disease that they were all terrified of catching. I wondered briefly why they were treating him this way, but my question " or questions " were all answered seconds afterward.

A boy swaggered up, a boy of about seven or eight years old, very tall and muscled, and a Viking helmet already perched upon his head. He sneered down at Hiccup, standing stubbornly in his way. "Hey, runt! Been setting any more fires lately?"

"Hello, Halfdan!" Hiccup greeted brightly. His green eyes sparkled, but I could hardly fail to notice that a hint of a blush crept up into his freckled cheeks. "No, I haven't " but you should ask Bosi if you want another fire started, he's happy to oblige!"

Halfdan laughed tauntingly. "I bet your old man was furious, wasn't he?"

The sparkle disappeared from the smaller boy's eyes completely, and his face burned bright, cherry red. "Yes," he admitted quietly. "He was. But I'm sure he's feeling a lot better about things by now, so I'm going to go and see him and help him repair the damage!"

"You?" Halfdan smirked. "You can't fix anything, Hiccup " you can only break them!"

Hiccup's blush deepened. "I "I can fix things! You'll see!"

"You can't even follow orders! The chieftain told you to stay in the house, and you ran out there"

"I thought Tessa was in trouble!" Hiccup wasn't reddening anymore, but the blush stayed ever prominent in his cheeks. "I was going out to help her!"

"Nobody needs your help," Halfdan snorted, rolling his eyes. "If they ever do, well "Thor help us all, because you can't!"

Hiccup glared at the older boy, standing on tiptoe to make himself taller; he still didn't equal the other boy's height. "You'll see! You'll see! I can help my daddy with cleaning up the village, I can!"

"When, in your life, have you ever done anything right?" Halfdan sneered.

At that moment, Alvin the Treacherous did come striding out into the village streets, barking orders at people. It seemed as though the dragon raid they kept referring to had damaged something very badly.

"Will everyone be okay?" A woman whispered tersely to Alvin.

He nodded grimly at her before turning a burning brown gaze on Hiccup. "Everybody of importance," he added under his breath before easily stepping in between the two boys and grabbing Hiccup up by his collar. I tried to stop him, to pry them away, but the invisible barrier came back into play, rendering it impossible.

Hiccup shrank back from the man's unexpected touch. "H-hi, Daddy," he quivered nervously. "Umâ€¦do you want me to help repair K-Ketil's house?"

"I'd be better off if I had a son that followed my orders," Alvin said harshly, and Hiccup flinched. "You're not helping with repairs, Hiccup â€" you can't do anything right even when you're just walking a straight line, but to have you doing work around the villageâ€¦" he shuddered, as if no words could properly express his horror.

I scowled at him, trying to step in between them, but it was no use: this was the past, and I couldn't intervene.

The boy wilted under the man's glare. "I'm sorry, Daddy."

"You'd better be," the man growled at him as he began to walk away, still holding onto Hiccup's collar, dragging the boy with him. "You started three fires last night, Hiccup. Three!"

I wondered briefly why Alvin was scolding him in the morning, instead of the night it had happened, but then I remembered him banishing the boy from his house. Possibly he had been too angry to scold.

"I thought Vikings liked fire," Hiccup replied in a very small voice as the chief's hut came into view on the horizon. "Bosiâ€¦"

"Not all of Bosi's upstairs lights are on," Alvin muttered. "You can't go following his example, Hiccup. Be more like Halfdan, there's a good lad."

"But Halfdan doesn't even like me!"

"And it's a small wonder why not!" Alvin snapped, turning suddenly upon the boy as they reached the porch. He stood for a moment on the creaky wooden steps, glaring down at Hiccup. "You never listen, you can't do anything right! Why didn't you just stay in the house like I asked?"

With every word Alvin spoke, Hiccup was shrinking down, farther and farther, staring in humiliation at the ground. His cheeks were flushed again. "I'm sorry, Daddy," he mumbled, his voice thick with tears. "I'mâ€¦I'm tryingâ€¦"

"And Vikings don't \_cry\_!" Alvin finished off his rant with a bellow, but he tugged Hiccup into the house all the same, slamming the door shut behind them.

The screaming whirlwind of blurry colors suddenly enveloped me again, yanking me back within the vortex's depths. When it set me down, surprisingly gently, I was standing in front of the house again, but this time, it looked older, more weather-beaten.

This time, Alvin did not come out dragging Hiccup; on the contrary, both were walking inside. Hiccup was a bit older by this time, about six and a half. He kept his head down, studying his feet as he walked, and Alvin was glowering down at him with clear disapproval. I was guessing an event like the first had happened again.

Hiccup started up the wooden steps, but fell back with a slight cry

of pain. "Ow!" He put a hand instantly to his knee, staring up at Alvin, walking right by him. "Daddy, I scraped my knee," he sniffed, rising to his feet again, favoring the bleeding one.

Alvin looked down at him furiously. "You did what?"

"I scraped my knee," Hiccup said uncertainly; fear was evident in his tone.

The Outcast chieftain pushed open the door and snorted. "You scraped your knee? Tripping over the steps, I suppose? You're such a klutz. Man up, Hiccup. A real Viking doesn't feel pain."

Hiccup flinched. "Iâ€|Iâ€|"

"You need to learn to take things like a man!" Alvin sounded angrier now as he stomped into the house, leading Hiccup with him. "You're useless in every other respect!"

Hiccup lingered on the last step, and just before he went inside the house, I could see his huge green eyes filling with tears.

## 96. Witness Part 3

Untold

### Chapter 96 - Witness Part 3

Summary: Continuation to 'Witness'.

\*\*A/N: Just so you know, I know that Stoick is pretty much emotionless for much of this chapter. He's telling the story rather than feeling, but I think what he's feeling must be pretty clear to the reader. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Daddy! Daddy!" The childish voice cut sharply through the darkness of the single bedroom. The whirlwind had delivered me to another time, another place. I could see Hiccup's tiny child outline in the dim light of the moon as he crawled onto the bed, tugging at the covers and trying to rouse Alvin. "Wake up!"<p>

The man jerked awake suddenly, blinking in confusion. "Hiccup?" he demanded, but he didn't really sound angry, just honestly baffled. "What are you doing?"

"Daddy, I had a nightmare!" Hiccup yelped fearfully, wiping at his running nose. "It was horrible! I thought you were gone forever!"

Alvin grabbed the boy's arm and flung him back down onto the wooden floor. "Go back to sleep!" Now he sounded angry.

"Daddy! Please! It was so scary! Please can't I stay with you?"

"No." The chief's reply was short and sharp. "Vikings don't get nightmares, Hiccup. Don't be weak."

\* \* \*

><p>"Go jump off a cliff!"<p>

"You should get lost, Useless!"

"Go get eaten by a dragon, it'd be doing us all a favor!"

Hiccup was running flat-out, his hands over his ears and his head down. He looked to be on the verge of tears, his face bright red from humiliation and mud splattered in his hair and on the front of his tunic. He had been wearing a brown shirt and plain black trousers up until this point, but his green tunic made a bolt of recognition run through me. This time, I recognized him, felt a stronger anger towards the people who were yelling. Turning to look, I saw Halfdan, a girl with long, glossy auburn hair and an overweight blonde boy, all smirking maliciously.

Halfdan and the girl had a handful of pebbles, which they were throwing with all their might at Hiccup's retreating back. The boy made it to the safety of the forest, but he didn't stop there. He kept running until he reached a positive wall of boulders. The rocks looked weather-beaten and old, but Hiccup hauled himself easily up, nimble as a monkey, and squirmed through a tiny gap, landing easily in a beautiful clearing. A cool breeze rippled the green lake, sending up little waves. Birds sang high above us in unseen trees and nests, and Hiccup sighed in satisfaction, sinking down in the grass, leaning against a moss-covered rock.

\* \* \*

><p>Ten-year-old Hiccup peeked tentatively around himself before slipping into the clearing this time, and I instantly understood why: heavy and thumping footsteps and loud yells reached my ears. Hiccup jumped nimbly off the rocks, landing on his feet smoothly before brushing himself off and starting to pace around the cove. He stopped instantly, with a gasp of horror, staring down at the still black shape on the ground in front of him.<p>

Hiccup sank to his knees, reaching out to touch the scaly black head. Piercing, reptilian green eyes snapped open, and I realized with a start that this dragon must have been Toothless.

"Hi," Hiccup greeted the dragon nervously, instantly withdrawing his hand. "Umâ€¦I didn't mean to disturb you, but you landed in my cove. I mean, it's not my cove, obviously, it belongs to whoever discovered itâ€¦whoever landed on Outcast Island in the first placeâ€¦but, um, I'm not a dragon killer. I'm quite the opposite in fact, I don't even like violence. Bet you've never heard of a Viking like that, have you?"

As Hiccup talked, he reached down, putting his hands inside his boots, searching for something. He opened his vest and brightened, drawing out a knife. The dragon stared fearfully up at him but Hiccup just sighed and shook his head. "I don't know if you can understand human speech, but I'm not going to kill you. I just said that I don't even like violence myself. I'm the most pathetic Viking that the uncivilized world has ever seen. That's what Father tells me, anyway. But it's true." He sawed through the thick ropes with his knife,



making me wonder who had downed the dragon in the first place. "Sorry about the ropes, I hope they're not hurting you too much. I'll have them off you in a sec, hold on."

As soon as he'd said the words, the ropes fell to the ground and the dragon shook himself proudly, fanning out his leathery black wings. For a moment, Toothless regarded Hiccup curiously, and then he flew off, deeper into the forest, crashing into a tree on his way.

Hiccup stared after him for a second, picking up his knife rather shakily. As he stuck it back in his belt, he stumbled from the clearing, back towards the rocks, looking like he was about to faint. Amazingly, he made it to the boulders and began climbing up them, but not before Alvin appeared suddenly at the entrance, trying to squeeze his way in. Unfortunately, his shoulders were too broad, his stomach too wide to fit through the way. "Hiccup!" he rasped, his eyes widening. "What are you doing down there?"

"Oh! I was, just, er—" Hiccup's tiny hand flew instantly to his vest, as if checking to see if his knife was still there. "Just, um—checking this place to see if the Night Fury had fallen here. He hasn't, though, I just searched!"

"Thank Thor." Alvin withdrew himself from the hole and Hiccup sighed, leaning against the rocks, sinking back down onto the grass.

\* \* \*

><p>"Which is your dominant hand?" The man demanded of Hiccup, looking at him critically.<p>

"Um—" Hiccup, who was about eleven now, looked from his left to his right with a bit of a sigh. "Vikings aren't supposed to be left-handed, are they?"

"You don't have to worry about that." The man looked seedy and old; his teeth were brown and stained, his mustache falling limply in place. He looked old and tired and frustrated, as if life had cheated him one too many times. "We gave up on making you a proper Viking a long time ago. Just use your left if that's your dominant."

Hiccup flushed and picked up the knife in his left hand, looking at the target, very far away. "I thought these targets were used for archery?"

"Oh, they are," the man assured him swiftly. "But seeing as you're normally the target for knife-throwing lessons, you have to use an archery target instead. You won't be able to tell the difference."

I scowled a bit at the old man, but Hiccup just stared at the ground for a couple seconds before composing himself and throwing it, as hard as he could. It fell ten feet shy, landing in the grass with a soft thump and a chink of metal.

There were a few scattered laughs; glancing back, I saw a group of kids around Hiccup's age, Halfdan among them, were pointing and laughing. The auburn-haired girl and the blonde boy were there, too.

The man snorted. "Is that the best you can do? By Thor, I've heard

rumors from your father for years but after seeing thisâ€¦"

Hiccup flushed a deep red. "I'm not very strong, Ketil," he mumbled, mortified as more laughter was heard.

"No shit, Sherlock," Ketil replied, retrieving the knife from its spot in the grass and grabbing Hiccup up, moving him a bit closer.

The boy flinched slightly at the swear, but otherwise ignored it, accepting the knife once more and throwing it again.

"Don't choke, Hiccup!" Halfdan called spitefully.

The knife was only a few inches away from the target this time, which was a pronounced improvement, though that could have been because Ketil had moved him closer.

"Stand there and keep trying," Ketil directed impatiently. "I have to get back to the forge now, to repair all those weapons that you destroyed last night."

Hiccup blushed again, becoming extremely interested in the grass. "I tried not to," he muttered. "I was only trying to helpâ€¦"

Ketil, uninterested in his excuses, ambled away in the direction of the smithy, I assumed.

The girl flipped her long red hair over one shoulder, coming to stand by Hiccup. She resembled Astrid Hofferson, in a way, except her eyes were silvery blue and she was wearing a plain brown tunic and leggings. She certainly wasn't as muscled as most Viking girls, but there were hints of strength in her tall, athletic shape. "Do you want me to help?" she offered.

Hiccup looked very surprised, and maybe I was imagining it, but his blush seemed to deepen. "Wouldâ€¦would you really, Tessa?"

She drew back with a little laugh. "Of course not. I wouldn't be caught dead touching the useless loser." She flipped her hair back over her shoulder and sashayed over to the other kids.

"C'mon," Halfdan announced. "Let's show this kid what real knife-throwing looks like. We won't be needing that target anymore."

## 97. Be Careful What You Wish For Part 5

Untold

Chapter 97 - Be Careful What You Wish For Part 5

Summary: Continuation of the 'Wish' arc.

**\*\*A/N: \*\*\*\*SURPRISE\*\***

**\*\*Yes, this is the surprise. Updating all of my eighteen in-progress fics at once. It was pretty crazy, but I did it, and it's here, and good day to you all! I had tons of fun doing this, so I hope you guys**

have tons of fun reading this!\*\*

\*\*Anyway, lil baby Hiccup is just so cute awww x3 x3 x3 \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Stoick, look, it's just a month. What's so wrong with that?"<p>

"A month," I responded, stony-faced, "a month of having a five-year-old kid running around my house, probably getting in a heap of trouble, having to be looked after every second of the day, tailed constantly by a dragon with an almost puppy-like devotion to him and no memories of me except what Alvin the Treacherous has told him. Yes, Gobber, a month really won't be that bad." I rolled my eyes at him.

"Well, I mean, yeah, the villagers might give you odd looks once you explainâ€"

"The villagers?" I repeated faintly. For once, I didn't have a million matters of the rest of the island on my mind; Hiccup and his current state were the only things plaguing my thoughts.

"Yes, the villagers," Gobber replied, clearly exasperated. "How long do you think you can keep a five-year-old a secret from a hundred Vikings, and several dragons?"

"Weeeeeelllllâ€|. " I dragged out the word, peeking into the living room to see that Hiccup and Toothless had quit wrestling; they appeared to be carrying on a one-sided conversation. "It might be best if we don't tell them quite yet, I meanâ€|for Odin's sake, what would they say? More importantly, what would I say? How could I explain something like this?"

"But just how do you think you're going to keep it quiet?" Gobber folded his arms.

I fell silent for a moment, listening to the quiet murmur of the boy's voice in the background. "Okay, I'm not sure," I admitted after a long second, "but I'm sort of making things up as I go along right now, Gobber. I'll figure something out, I'll figure out what to tell them."

Gobber sighed, as if he thought me stupid, and I glared at him.

"Well, if you have any better ideas, save for making a huge announcement and telling everybody what an idiot I've been, I'll hear you out." Without giving him time to respond, I marched to the door, opened it wide enough to walk through, and entered the living room again. Hiccup hadn't moved much this time, thank Thor; he was still leaning against Toothless, talking to the dragon and scratching him under the chin as casually as if he hadn't been raised in a village that killed them.

For a moment, I stared down at him, watching him cuddle up next to the Night Fury. It was infuriating, but unavoidable: a five-year-old child was going to be my downfall. How, exactly, did one talk to a child as young as he? And did you bend down to their heights, or did

that annoy them and make them feel short?

Of course, Gobber made it look easy as anything; he came right out of the room and ruffled Hiccup's hair, kneeling down so they were eye level. "Hey, little one," he greeted cheerfully. "How's it going?"

I expected Hiccup to answer him in the flat monotone he gave me as a teenager, but instead he scowled slightly. "I'm not little, I'm fierce!" he exclaimed with a pronounced lisp thanks to a missing front tooth and a slight crack.

Gobber and I exchanged loaded glances.

"Oh, of course you are," he recovered before I did, pushing his helmet up farther. Hiccup's eyes followed the progress of his hand, but he expressed no surprise at Gobber's lack of a left hand; he merely blinked up at the man, as if waiting for his next words.

Gobber gave me a pointed look, as if he wanted me to join him in talking to the kid. I reluctantly knelt down, but Hiccup shied slightly away from me, leaning closer to Gobber. I sent the blacksmith an exasperated look, and he rolled his eyes, seemingly at my behavior instead of Hiccup's. I opened my mouth to audibly retort, but I caught myself just in time.

"So, Hiccup, you like dragons, huh?" Gobber continued brightly as he watched the boy and the Night Fury interact.

"Well, I think they're nice," Hiccup insisted. "But the rest of my village doesn't, they're always complaining about them. But I think dragons are nice." He regarded Toothless adoringly, and the dragon's expression mirrored his as he licked the boy's cheek.

"Yeah, they are," Gobber replied encouragingly, and Hiccup looked around at him quickly.

"Really?" he repeated hopefully, his voice barely above a whisper. "Do you really, really believe that?"

"Well, I mean, Toothless is being pretty nice to you, isn't he? Obviously, dragons are nice, or at least some dragons are."

Hiccup broke out into a wide, gap-toothed grin, and Toothless gave Gobber an approving look, leaving me still completely at a loss for how to deal with the kid myself.

"Well, I'd better get back to work," Gobber clapped a hand on Hiccup's knee, making the boy wince slightly, but he didn't notice this as he was rising to his feet. "I'll be at the forge if either of you need me."

"Wait!" Abandoning my spot beside Hiccup, I scrambled as fast as I could after Gobber, who was already halfway to the door. I stood in front of it, barring his way. "You can't leave me here!"

He looked amused. "Why not?"

"B-because!" I sputtered. "What am I supposed to say to him? What am I supposed to do with him?"

"Well, you could start by giving him a bath."

I gave him an odd look.

"I'm just saying. Up close, he's a bit grimy-looking, and he probably won't willingly wash himself."

"That's your advice for me? Make him take a bath? I thought that five-year-olds needed a lot of sleep or something â€" or is that a lot of food?"

"No," Gobber interrupted firmly. "He'll just need to get to bed early, but he probably won't need as much food as the average Viking kid. Look at him, he's so small, he probably doesn't have the same appetite that other kids do."

I still felt like he was leaving me to navigate an active landmine alone. "You can't leave! What if he gets hurt? Or if he wanders off again?"

"If he wanders off or gets hurt, you know you can always just call me," Gobber replied impatiently. "Really, Stoick, we've been friends for thirty years, you know you can call on me whenever you need me."

"But the first time he wandered offâ€"

"Stoick. It's okay. Justâ€|just talk to him like you talk to me."

"I couldn't do that!"

"Yes, you can."

"No, I can't! Would I talk to him the way I talk to you?"

He considered. "Edit out the language."

"Whatever," I responded, feeling irritated and as if Gobber was no help whatsoever. "Whatever."

## 98. Vikings Don't Part VI

Untold

Chapter 98 - Vikings Don't Part VI

Summary: Continuation of 'Vikings Don't'.

**\*\*A/N: Exciting news! \*\***

**\*\*For one, this is dedicated to TheOneWithTheScar, who requested 'Vikings don't get tired'. I hope I did it justice. Anyway, I am typing this to the HTTYD soundtrack. If I'm not much mistaken, I was just on 'The Dragon Book' and have now moved to 'Focus, Hiccup!' Plus also, life is good. Please R and R. OH MY GOD LOOK AT THIS WE'RE ALMOST AT 100 CHAPTERS HOLY COWWWWW :DDDDDD \*\***

\* \* \*

><p><strong>6. Vikings Don't Get Tired<strong>

"Hiccup?" My daddy's rough voice startled me out of my temporary doze. "What are you doing?"

"I'm tired," I responded sleepily, rubbing furiously at my eyes. "I had bad dreams last night, Daddy, and now I'm tired." I rested my head back upon the kitchen table once more, but when silence followed my statement, I began to get nervous. Silence always meant something bad when you had a daddy like mine. "Daddy?" I lifted my head nervously.

"Vikings don't get tired, Hiccup!" he snapped. "And they don't get nightmares, either! For Thor's sake! How can I be expected to look after you like this when you're nothing but an embarrassment to me?"

I drew back, feeling my childish heart beginning to crumple inward on itself. "Iâ€|Iâ€|"

"Never mind," he sighed. "Get on, go upstairs, get out of my sight."

"Yes, Daddy," I replied sadly, standing from the table and scampering, frightened, up to my room. My bed called out to me, but I ignored it; Vikings didn't get tired. I wasn't going to sleep.

\* \* \*

><p>My eyes wouldn't stay open, no matter how hard I tried to coax them to do so. Gobber and Stoick were chatting still, apparently quite unaware of the late hour, but I rested my cheek on my hand, yawning and watching their outlines moving from in front of the glow of the fire. Stoick appeared to be telling a spirited story about an old married couple getting into a fierce fight involving an injured sheep, a skittish chicken, two yaks and a lot of accusations and insults, but I was barely listening. I wanted nothing more than to get upstairs and sleep, but I refused to cave, I refused to be weak. Vikings didn't get tired.<p>

"I'd better get back," Gobber muttered, glancing out one of the windows. "It's getting late. And besides, I think Hiccup is practically asleep over there," he added, a chuckle clear in his voice.

"I'm not asleep," I forced my eyes open and raised my head. "Vikings don't get tired."

"Oh, really?" Though everything else I said about what Vikings didn't do often saddened Stoick, this one appeared to amuse him; he was barely concealing a grin as he gently tugged me down, my head resting on his knee. "Then what are you doing?"

I considered trying to pull myself back up and maintain some dignity, but in the end I decided I didn't have the energy nor the strength. "Resting my eyes," I muttered thickly. "I'm just resting my eyes."

Stoick chuckled lightly. "Yeah, sure. I think I need to take him up

to bed," he added in a whisper to Gobber, supporting me with his arms now as he rose to his feet.

"I can walk!" I insisted crossly, but he didn't listen and continued on, up the staircase.

"This is unnecessary," I grouched. "And I'm too old for this."

"Maybe in your head, you're too old for it," he replied lightly.

"What is that supposed to mean?" I demanded, struggling to open my eyes as he opened the door to my bedroom and crossed it easily, reaching the bed.

He smiled at my tone. "Nothing whatsoever." He set me down upon the bed, pulled the covers up to my chin, kissed the top of my head and went back to the door.

## 99. Thunderstorm Part XII

Untold

Chapter 99 - Thunderstorm Part XII

Summary: Continuation of 'Thunderstorm'.

\*\*A/N: As I type this, I'm listening to 'Test Drive' off the HTTYD soundtrack. Omg, look, ninety-nine chapters! \*sings in Tiana's voice\* I'M  
\*\*

\*\*ALMOSSSSSTTTTTTT\*\*

\*\*THEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEERRRRRRRRRRRRREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE\*\*

\*\*Such a good movie. Anyway, I feel like I had something really important to tell you all...no, just that I think today, we had the last summer storm of the year. I won't pretend the season will be sorely missed with me, but I really do love the storms. I hope we get a few good ones in autumn, at least. But I love winter, so yeah, I don't mind as much :) although I am going to miss running in the rain x3 \*\*

\*\*And 99 CHAPTERS HOLY COWWW hey what do you get when you cross an elephant with a rhino? Elephino! xD xD xD \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Mildew stepped rather quickly away from me, but stood his ground. "Your son is not fit to be on Berk," he sneered, but he removed his boot from my stomach, which was a relief, because now I could breathe again.<p>

"I'll decide that, Mildew!" Stoick barked harshly, grabbing me up from my place on the docks and setting me down firmly behind him. The iron block weighed me down as it was, and I hit my knees the moment he released me, shuddering with each rumble of thunder and wishing

dearly that I had just left quietly.

"You're showing blatant and rather disgraceful favoritism, Stoick," Mildew sneered. "Perhaps your boy has turned you soft?"

"I don'tâ€|I didn'tâ€|you have no right to go around banishing people willy-nilly!" Stoick finally managed. "That is my job! I'm the chief!"

"Well, you're not doing your job very well, then!" jeered Mildew. "Just hand over the position, Stoick, and maybe your brother will give Hiccup what he deservesâ€"

"Whatever you say about my son, he is not the cause of these storms." Stoick was white with rage now.

The thunder gave a particularly nasty rumble and the lightning crackled fiercely, targeting that stupid metal statue they had made, that Astrid and Snotlout and Fishlegs and the twins had all made out of pity to convince me to stay. They felt sorry for me now, nothing else. I just wish they had let me leave. It would have been better for everyone.

I could hear Toothless growling softly behind the thick leather muzzle that Mildew and the other villagers had forced onto him just a few minutes ago. I should have unbuckled it, should have tried to free him, but I stood frozen, sodden and shaking, numb to everything.

CRACK.

Another bolt of lightning struck, much closer than the last. As I watched the darting blue flashes in the dark sky, firstly over the Hofferson household, and then over Stoick's, the theory that I hadn't had time enough to ponder came rushing back to me, making me wonderâ€|

I looked down at Toothless' scorched, sad-looking tailfin, and then back to the sky, where the lightning was once again cracking over the metal statue. I could hear the sizable crowd that had gathered to watch Mildew and Stoick yelling encouragement to the party they supported, but I didn't listen; I began elbowing people out of my way, determined to reach the arguing men. "Guys, listen!"

It wasn't easy to make myself heard over the yelling of two Viking men, so I contented myself with tugging at Stoick's sleeve.

"What is it?" he bellowed, glaring down at me, but I stood my ground.

"I think I know what's causing these storms!" I said, half-excited, half-scared. "No, wait, listen! It's the metal! The lightning is hitting the metal!" I pointed at the statue, the sky swirling over it blacker than ever.

There was a slightly stunned silence. And thenâ€|

"Oh, bah! Have you ever heard of anything so insane?"

"I can prove it!" With renewed excitement, I turned to take off for



Stoick's house, where I had seen the metal plates, but Mildew's voice stopped me again.

"The storm was going on even before that statue," he snapped, his voice cold.

"But there was another type of metal on Berk!" I replied. "It was that that was attracting the lightning!"

"What?" Mildew's face paled. "No there wasn't!"

"Yes, there was!" I insisted excitedly. "Follow me! Let me show you!"

With no advance warning, Mildew grabbed me by the shoulders, physically shaking me, one hand going to my throat. "THERE'S NOTHING THERE, YOU STUPID BOY!"

"LET GO OF MY SON!" Stoick hollered, possibly even louder than Mildew. "RELEASE HIM RIGHT NOW!" In all the chaos, I realized that he appeared to have drawn his sword.

For a moment, Mildew remained frozen in place, as though he was not going to let me go. But then he shoved me down onto the dock, a look of cold loathing overtaking his face. "I say that this boy is just trying to save his own skin!" he sneered. "Look at him, the pathetic, wretched, crawling, little!"

"MILDEW!" Stoick roared in warning, now advancing upon the older man and holding his sword at the ready. Mildew fell silent at once.

"I can prove it!" I insisted into the silence.

"I say throw them both out to sea!" Mrs. Thorston interrupted. "Him and his dragon!"

"No!" My heart clenched painfully at the thought of it. "No, wait, please!" I sprang to my feet again, stripping off the thick chain from which the iron block hung so I might be able stand properly. "Please, I'll show you what I'm talking about and then you guys can throw me off the island or kill me or whatever, I don't care, but please, please don't hurt Toothless!"

Stoick's large, warm hands found my shoulders suddenly and I leaned my head back slightly to look at him, feeling suddenly guilty for causing so much trouble.

"Hiccup, calm down," he whispered soothingly, before raising his voice to address the village at large. "I shall, of course, be investigating my son's claims, and I expect you all to hold your tongues until I have proven, or disproven, them."

A few people nodded shamefacedly, but most stared haughtily back at Stoick, waiting for something.

"Lead the way, Hiccup," he turned to me.

"Alright!" I replied, flustered. "Well, c'mon." I started running in the direction of Stoick's house, the iron block slipping a little in my sweaty palm. I could hear other people following me,

probably trying to see if what I was saying was really true. I thought I detected confusion in Stoick's expression when we reached his house, but I didn't bother explaining; hitting my knees instantly, scrabbling in the dirt. My fingers sought the disturbed mound and the moment they found a smooth, cool surface, I was on my feet again, waving it over my head. "Look! Look! See?"

Stoick's eyebrows flew up. Mildew, on the other hand—his pale eyes narrowed dangerously. "Very clever, boy," he spat, his face definitely paler now. "But can you prove that they're all over the island?"

"Yes!" I retorted, getting at once to my feet again, seeking the next pile of dirt and ripping it up to reveal a second metal plate. "See? There are more!"

"Nobody believes you!" Mildew howled; he now looked slightly mad; his thin frame was shaking and he was sweating now. "Nobody believes you, boy!"

"Look, I can prove it!" I scrambled up at once from my spot on the ground, desperation for my dragon making me run. I could feel my legs pumping beneath me, the rumbles of thunder and flashes of lightning intruding upon my determination, tainting me with fear.

I reached the higher docks again, running out onto the very end and, without thinking, without really even having a plan, I threw myself onto the deck of the nearest ship, looking around myself for something metal, something that could help prove—

My eyes sought the high mast, and an idea took hold of me, along with a certain amount of fear. Everything in me recoiled at the idea of getting that close to the storm, but— I glanced back once at Toothless, still bound and chained, remembering Mrs. Thorston's words. I threw myself at the mast, grabbing at the rope ladder dangling from the end. I remembered the little teaching I had gotten about boats from Outcast Island: "always climb in calm weather. Don't climb too quickly." —

Well, I was disregarding all that now, I thought to myself as I pulled myself to a standing position at the very top. I could hear Stoick yelling at me, but the roaring of the wind and rain was louder here now. My legs were trembling as I dared to glance up at the black sky, lightning still flashing across it.

\_Focus, Hiccup. Be brave. Do it for Toothless. He could be killed if you don't. \_

"See, look!" I raised the iron block over my head, inwardly shuddering when the lightning struck closer than ever. "It's just the metal, it's nothing to do with—"

And then, as I raised the block still higher, I heard the loudest boom of thunder yet, followed by the most intense pain I had ever felt. It shook every part of my body, so blinding and agonizing that it was nearly electric, burning and cutting every nerve ending I had. My body begged for release as I stood there shaking, the current running through me one last time before letting me go once more. Vaguely, as if from a very long way away, I felt my grip on the block going limp, my precarious position upon the mast bringing me down,

and I felt myself falling, down, down, down, until I hit something very cold and very hard. And then I passed out.

## 100. Comparing Clone Part 1

Untold

### Chapter 100 - Comparing Clone Part 1

Summary: A strange boy with a familiar name and face washes up on Berk and makes Hiccup uneasy...unfortunately, nobody else shares his feelings.

**\*\*A/N:** Sorry it's not Thunderstorm, but it's the cliché 'somebody thinks somebody else is up to something and nobody else listens' scenario! This was inspired and abetted by three things: XiaolinShowdownFan12345 and her story, 'Losing a Friend' for Treasure Planet; a roleplay I'm doing with RazzlePazzleDooDot; and the fact that I have a friend who has a friend who resembles me.\*\*

**\*\*This is an AU of Starlight, Star Bright where it was this guy who washed up on Berk instead of Humongous. \*\***

\* \* \*

><p>Have you ever seen a mirror image of yourself? Have you ever met your doppelganger? It's pretty eerie, isn't it, to see someone whom you've never met, this person you don't know, looking extraordinarily like the face you see in the mirror?<p>

Now, think about that, about your mirror image. Imagine what it would be like, for just a second or two. Now go back and take away all the flaws. Replace it with things that you've always wanted to have. Maybe your face is round, and you'd rather it be narrow, or your hair is curly but you want it to be straight. That was what Hakon was for me. He was my mirror, but a mirror such as I had never dreamed of having â€” a mirror that showed me what I wanted to be, instead of what I really was.

When I first saw him, kneeling on Thor's Beach, half the village running up the sand to greet him, I recognized him, because I knew that that was how I looked. His hair was borderline brown, instead of red, his Viking helmet was lopsided, he had no freckles and he lookedâ€”he looked like a real Viking. And even though I was the polar opposite of real Viking, I couldn't help thinking that he looked like me, as well. Stoick didn't seem to think this at all; he did draw back for a quick moment, studying him in his sodden clothes and shaking frame with a quizzical expression on his face, but then he dropped to his knees beside the boy, one hand going to his sword.

The boy raised his head shyly. "Sorry for intruding on your island," he sighed heavily, as if this was all in a day's work, "I'm just tired, you see, and I want a bit of rest before I go back out amongst the waves."

Stoick's face showed nothing but confusion. "Don't you have a boat?"

"I did," the boy admitted, "but it crashed."

His voice did not sound like mine; it was deeper, more mature than mine would ever be.

"Well, how long have you been swimming?" Stoick demanded of the boy, who shrugged.

"Only an hour or so, not long. But I don't want to risk drowning out there, soâ€"

"What's your name?" Stoick interrupted, as if he found the boy's chatter irritating.

"Hakon."

The name stirred something in my memory, but I couldn't think what. I thought I might have heard Gobber saying the name once, because the voice in my memory sounded like his, but I didn't know. Stoick, on the other hand, had clearly heard the name somewhere before, because his eyes widened and he looked terribly shocked. With a single blink, it was gone, his emotions masked once more by the chieftain he had to be on the outside, but he looked at me then, as if mentally comparing me to the boy in front of him. I didn't have to know the boy to know that, in a comparison between us, I would always fall short.

"Well, then, Hakonâ€|" Stoick's voice seemed to constrict oddly when he said the name, but again, it was gone in an instant. "Where are you from?"

This seemed a rather intrusive question to me, especially considering that the crowd of villagers had swelled now, although it could have just seemed that way because I had crashlanded on Berk after escaping Outcast Island.

"Peaceable Island," Hakon told him quietly. Stoick looked at me again, but this time, I could see why; Peaceable Island was the place I had claimed to have come from myself when I crashed on Berk.

"I left to explore," he explained hastily, "and they gave me a boat and sent me on my way."

Stoick looked back at him once more and nodded, standing up to his full height again. Although Hakon was shorter than he was, he was at least better than me, whom Stoick could pick up one-handedly.

"Where am I, by the way?" Hakon's gray eyes, unlike my green ones, flickered once around the island, resting on me for a long second. I felt a sudden, painful wrenching in my gut, an emotion I couldn't explain, one not unlike anger coursing through me. A corner of his mouth twitched up into a cold little smile, and Toothless began to growl. But then, he regarded any stranger as a threat after what Alvin had done to me.

"The island of Berk," Stoick replied, unaware that anything odd had happened. "Come with me, and answer some questions?" It wasn't an order; it was a request made in amicable politeness.

Hakon nodded curtly, tearing his eyes away from mine and following Stoick down one of the streets.

"Get outta here â€" clear away â€" nothing to see here!" Gobber called, obviously trying to shepherd everybody away from the scene. Most people blinked, shook themselves and returned at once to their tasks, but I stayed where I was, trying to figure out why I'd felt such an insane urge to separate Hakon from Stoick.

"You okay, lad?" Gobber added to me in a low voice as he reached my side.

I nodded slowly. "Did Hakon seem a bitâ€|odd to you?" I asked, choosing my words carefully.

Gobber raised a thick blonde eyebrow. "You seemed a bit odd to me when you first turned up," he reminded me dryly.

If he was trying to be funny, I thought as I rolled my eyes, he was falling flat. "No, I know, butâ€|odd in a different way."

"Any number of people turn up on Berkâ€"

"And Stoick looked at him weird!" I interrupted. "Why did he do that? He looked really astonishedâ€|"

"Of course he did," Gobber replied, and his tone of voice was strange; he sounded almost pitying. "Hakon was the name he intended to give you, before you were stolen away."

As soon as Gobber spoke the words, I remembered where I had heard the name before: lying on the floor of Stoick's living room wrapped in a blanket, listening to the two men talk in the next room.

"Oh. Right."

"And besides, lad, you get people crashing onto Berk all the time, Hakon is nothing new. Believe me, Stoick will probably have him halfway off the island by nightfall. It's no big deal."

Not entirely convinced, but knowing I was getting nowhere, I followed Gobber back to the forge.

## 101. Comparing Clone Part 2

Untold

Chapter 101 - Comparing Clone Part 2

Summary: Continuation of 'Comparing Clone'.

\*\*A/N: Well, hello there! My next chapter is up, and I hope you guys all like it! :D Thank you for all the reviews! Please leave me some more, if you're up to it :D \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I tried to put that matter of Hakon and Stoick out of my mind when I got to the forge, knowing that I had a job to do and that I wouldn't be doing any weapons justice if I was too focused on other things. Gobber kept morale in the forge up by making jokes and

insisting that the trolls had been to visit him again last night, for he was missing another left sock.<p>

I listened to these stories a little absently, because I was never quite sure whether I believed Gobber, that trolls existed, or Stoick's disdainful eye rolls whenever Gobber even mentioned them. Before I knew it, however, the workday was over, the sun was setting, the sky was red and I was leaving the forge, letting the wooden door slam shut behind him.

I saw Stoick a little farther along, talking to some other villagers and I offered him a faint smile. He didn't return it if he saw it, his eyes seeming to see right through me. I didn't bother stopping to chat, though; it was clear that the discussion he was having was important, so I let him be, turning instead in the direction of the house.

For a moment, when I entered, leaning against the door to close it and wiping my tired eyes, I thought I had entered the wrong house, for there was somebody sitting up at the kitchen table as if waiting for me. I hesitated upon walking farther inside, but then I realized it was just Hakon and, odd as he might have been, if Stoick trusted him enough to let him in the house, that was good enough for me.

"Hi!" he greeted me cheerfully, springing up from the table and smiling eagerly at me.

I looked at him for a moment, unable to locate why I felt that sudden rush of anger again. I stood up a little straighter without really knowing why. "Hello," I said cautiously.

"It's Hiccup, isn't it?"

I nodded slowly, edging closer to the stairs to communicate that I wanted to cut our conversation short.

"Your dad talks about you a lot," Hakon explained, his voice full of warmth.

"Yeah, I've heard that before," I responded uncomfortably, resting my real foot on the bottom stair now to indicate that I was leaving within the next two point five seconds.

Hakon looked very surprised. "Is he not your dad?"

"What makes you think that?" I demanded, probably a little defensively.

"You looked sort of uncomfortable when I called him your dad, but the way he talked about you, I mean, you must be."

"Oh." I nodded. "Right, then, can I ask what you're doing here?"

"Your dad â€" I mean, sorry, Stoick, obviously â€" told me to wait here while he went out and dealt with something." Hakon shrugged, his gray eyes sparkling with mirth as he spoke. "I think he's hoping that if he stays gone long enough, I'll have vanished."

I smiled politely at his joke, but my amusement was only skin-deep, and again, I turned towards the stairs before realizing that Toothless wasn't following. "Toothless?" I turned back to stare at him; his head was bent low to the ground, and he was emitting soft, feral growls.

"Toothless, c'mon, bud," I urged, gesturing towards the stairs.

"Is that a Night Fury?" Hakon asked interestedly, actually walking the length of the table and approaching us now.

"Yes," I replied testily, unsure why I hated the idea of him being close to my dragon so much. "He's very ferocious, and he doesn't take well to strangers," I added pointedly, stepping slightly in front of Toothless to prevent him getting any closer to Hakon.

"Oh, I'm sorry," Instantly, the boy was apologetic once more, taking a few steps backward. "I didn't thinkâ€¦I mean, dragons have never liked me much anyway."

"Oh, really?" I tried to keep my voice sounding politely interested; in my head, if Toothless disliked somebody, there must be a concrete reason behind it and that was that. Before he'd even known Alvin, before I'd even tried to combine the two worlds I loved, he'd hated him.

"Yeah," Hakon smiled lightly. "I've never understood why, either, the Peaceable Tribe doesn't fight them."

"Fascinating," I responded, my voice teetering on venomous. Well, if Toothless didn't like Hakon, either, at least now I understood why I didn't, I thought to myself as I turned for the fourth time, towards the stairs. This time, Toothless followed me.

"You're leaving?" Hakon looked crestfallen.

For just a few moments, I fought a losing battle; I tried to say, 'not if you don't want me to' or 'I can stay and chat for a few'. But in the end, I said, my voice rather snappish and not at all like mine, "Yes. I'm very tired, and I have a lot of work to do. Good night."

I didn't turn back to see how Hakon was dealing with my rudeness; I couldn't help but feel a burning anger towards him, even if I knew he had nothing to do with it. I reached my bedroom and slammed the door shut, but I had only just sat back down upon my bed when I heard the front door opening and then shutting. I sat up a bit straighter, rising from the bed instantly and opening my door, peering out into the living room from my spot on the landing.

"Hello, sir," Hakon greeted Stoick politely when the Viking chieftain entered the house, taking off his helmet and cloak.

"Hi, Hiccup," Stoick replied absently, hanging his helmet on its hook by the door.

Compared to what I felt then, my previous anger was nothing more than mere annoyance; there was a ripping sensation somewhere near my stomach, as if my own body was being torn in two due to the sudden twisting of my gut. My hands clenched involuntarily into fists and

the world seemed to turn momentarily red; whatever was wrong with Hakon to me seemed to have multiplied tenfold in the last ten seconds and all I knew was that Stoick should not have been calling him by my name.

Hakon, however, did not seem affected by this at all; he merely laughed lightly and said, "Thanks for the greeting, but I'm not Hiccup."

"What?" Stoick looked around at him, really looked, and shrugged. "Can't keep track of my own kid, can I? Well, Hakon, it appears we'd better settle some things before you get going again. Would you like us to build you a boat?"

"That would be nice, sirâ€¦"

The voices drifted from the living room to the kitchen, where they became rather mumbled and indistinct. I stayed crouched for a moment longer, weighing my desire to see Stoick against my intense and slightly frightening dislike of Hakon. I had just made the decision to head back into my room when another thought arose: whoever this kid was, whatever he was doing here, I did not want to leave him alone with Stoick. Summoning my remaining stamina, I walked back downstairs, into the kitchen, where they appeared to be discussing plans for a boat.

"There you are, Hiccup," Stoick gave me a smile that did not quite reach his tired gray eyes, so like Hakon's. "You two look so much alike, I accidentally called him you."

"I heard," I said, with an unnatural bite in my voice. Realizing how grumpy I sounded, I forced myself to smile. "Anyway, so, uhâ€¦hi, then."

Stoick nodded once before turning back to Hakon. "So, a boat, then? That's all you need?"

"Wellâ€¦" Hakon hedged, tracing a pattern in the table with his index finger, "I don't mean to intrude upon your hospitality, sirâ€¦which is excellent, by the wayâ€¦"

\_Kiss-ass, \_I thought to myself, unbidden but amusing.

"â€¦But I did lose all my weapons when the boat crashed as well," Hakon admitted. "So, erm, I was wondering if maybe I could have just a weapon from your forge, if you have one? The Peaceable Tribe doesn't, of course, but they forged me a few, just in case I ever got into a trouble spotâ€¦"

"Oh, we can do that, no problem." Stoick waved a hand dismissively. "What kind of weapon do you need?"

"Oh, it doesn't matter, sir," Hakon replied happily. "I can use anything, a sword, a mace, an axeâ€¦"

"Can you?" Stoick looked impressed as another burst of dislike hit me.

\_So he can use a couple different weapons, big deal! \_



"Well, that's something you don't see every day. What's your specialty weapon, then, I suppose?"

"Again, I can use just about anything," Hakon shrugged. "I adjust quickly."

"Impressive," Stoick allowed, raising an eyebrow.

Another rush of anger.

"Thank you, sir," Hakon bowed his head humbly.

I bit my lip to keep from saying anything, pretending to have found a very interesting speck of dirt on the tabletop.

"Hiccup is very accomplished at swords," Stoick pressed on, taking his own out of its scabbard and showing it to the other boy. "Maybe he could make yours?"

\_Over my dead body.\_

"That'd be great," Hakon replied warmly.

I tried to catch Stoick's eye, to tell him I didn't want to do this without words, but he wasn't looking at me; his attention was fixed solely on the boy on the other side of the table.

## 102. A Hero's Guide to Deadly Dragons

Untold

### Chapter 102 - A Hero's Guide to Deadly Dragons

Summary: When Hiccup accidentally destroys a book, he goes off in search of a copy to mend the mistake, with his cousin and dragon in tow.

**\*\*A/N: PLEASE READ THIS \*\***

**\*\*Firstly, I was rereading the Harry Potter series, and I'm onto the Deathly Hallows now. I probably should have been reading that, but I found my copy of A Hero's Guide to Deadly Dragons in a different room in the house and I was like what I remember this book, but I don't remember liking it that much...and I flicked it open and began perusing and then I was like wait hey this book is cool. So, yeah. I had to write something of a book plot within the movie and TBLTWYLM universe, so this was born. How can I write 5k in this AU filled with Hiccup/Snotlout interaction, and not even write 300 words of Hiccup/Snotlout angst and feels for I Didn't Mean to Hurt You, Too? Anyway, don't stop reading, I still have quite a bit to say.\*\***

**\*\*This one-shot felt pointless to me as I worked on it. I enjoyed writing it, but I failed to see the reason behind why I was writing it. I think, however, that I've located it. I got a few reviews on the latest part of Thunderstorm, telling me that Hiccup was braver in that arc than he was in canon. Well, I guess that's true, but I don't want people to mistake that for the real Hiccup, as I see him in this story. He is not completely selfless; this act of going to the**

Library was selfish. He is desperate to cling to Stoick, despite the fact that he says constantly that Stoick should give up on him, because Stoick is the only human being who has ever shown him kindness in this way, and Hiccup is absolutely determined to cling to this. What he does here is a fairly selfish act to save himself, instead of the noble choice he made in the canon plotline of the book, to save Toothless from banishment. Maybe this doesn't show Hiccup in the best light, but I'm determined to show the reader that he has flaws. And I'm not excusing them by saying, 'oh, Stoick's the only human who has ever been nice to him'. I'm only hoping to outline why he's pulling something reckless and selfish in this, not excusing it. \*\*

\*\*Furthermore, DO NOT STOP READING WAIT \*\*

\*\*Do any of you actually like Comparing Clones, or are you just reading it because I'm posting it? Because if nobody likes it, I'll gladly stop. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Look, Toothless, look!"<p>

I held up the wooden bow, notching one of my homemade arrows in the rest and drawing back the string, holding it up to my cheek. The bow was crude and its poor craftsmanship showed, but I was proud of myself for finally mastering the art of a bow. Ketil had never taught me anything to do with wood, just metal; Gobber's skill in crafting bows came as something of a surprise to me.

Toothless gave me a look, as if he were trying to silently communicate that I was going to take someone's eye out if I shot the arrow "namely mine.

I rolled my eyes. "Oh, c'mon, Toothless, what's the harm? Look, I'll go into a more open space if that would make you happy. Actually, that'd probably be best, I don't want the book to accidentally get damaged."

My dragon and I both eyed the book sitting on the chair in the corner of the room: the book Stoick had loaned me, one of the only books on the Isle of Berk. It wasn't so much about the book as it was that I was terrified that I was going to ruin it; Stoick had trusted me with a book that he'd stolen himself from the Meathead Public Library, and I was such a walking disaster that I could easily find a way to wreak havoc.

As this thought occurred, I turned to leave, hoping to try out the bow before sundown. A voice came floating to me from the main room of the forge and that's when things definitely took a turn for the worse. I had grown used to hearing Gobber calling me occasionally, trying to get me out of the backroom, but this was a new voice, unfamiliar and unwelcome. As the tattered curtain rustled, I did pretty much the only thing that came naturally and chucked the bow at the intruder.

The arrow flew from the rest, burying its head an inch from the intruder's face, into the wooden wall. The bow clattered to the floor and Toothless, startled but determined to defend me, let out a breath of fire. In the same instant, we both realized that it wasn't an

intruder "it was just Snotlout, holding his hands up in a gesture of surrender. "Whoa! Don't shoot, Hiccup, it's just me!"

He eyed the shaft sticking out of the wall and added testily, "You nearly took my eye out!"

"Sorry," I muttered distractedly, stamping on the flames Toothless had caused in his alarm. "What'd you come in here for, anyway?"

"Your father's looking for you," Snotlout replied, yanking the arrow out of the wall with ease and handing it back to me. "According to Gobber, you were insisting on working late in the forge, and you were trying to make a bow with indecent enthusiasm. Knowing your general tendency to cause chaos, I thought I'd better check on you. Stoick's too busy, he's settling a quarrel in the village."

Red-faced, I took the arrow from Snotlout, picked up the bow and tossed both onto the work desk, wrinkling my nose instinctively at the lingering smell of smoke. "C'mon, bud, we'd better go." However, as I turned around to look at Toothless again, my eyes fell upon the slightly smoldering chair in the corner, burned from Toothless' fire. "Oh, no!" I exclaimed, bolting over towards it and upending the chair in my haste to inspect the book.

"What is it?" Snotlout demanded, crossing the room in two strides and kneeling down beside me. "Hiccup, what's wrong?"

I didn't answer; I just stared, miserably, at the singed, blackened cover of Professor Yobbish's book. It wasn't even a small burn, so I couldn't cover it up; it had eaten up nearly one half, and something told me Stoick would notice that.

"Were you reading that or something?" Snotlout's question brought me sharply back to earth.

"No," I mumbled miserably. "I mean, yes, but it's Stoick's, not mine. He's going to kill me if he gets it back and it's ruined."

"Oh, c'mon, it won't be that bad," he replied encouragingly.

"Yes, it will be." I sighed, leaning against the desk, tilting my head back slightly. "He's going to hate me. He's going to hit me."

"He will not," Snotlout retorted.

"Yes, he will," I argued, turning to face him again. "I guess I'd better think of what to tell him, then." With a sigh, I gathered up the burned remains of the book, coughing as the smoke still issuing from it filled my nostrils.

Snotlout was watching me with a very odd expression on his face.

"What?" I demanded, maybe a little rudely, as I motioned for Toothless to follow me, and made to leave the backroom.

"Maybe your dad doesn't have to know about the book," Snotlout's

brown eyes were starting to gleam with the beginnings of an idea.

"Oh, sure!" I replied, with obvious sarcasm. "So, when he asks, 'Hiccup, where's my book', what do I say? My dragon ate it?"

"No, no, listen!" Snotlout jumped up from his spot, looking excited now. "He stole that book from the Meathead Public Library, right?"

"Yesâ€|" I nodded slowly, unsure what to think, how to respond.

"So, what if they had another copy there?"

"Yeah, that'd be fantastic!" I snapped. "There's only one problem, Snotlout â€" \_that Library isn't open to the public\_!"

"No, wait!" he protested. "What if we went to the Library, and stole a copy of the book? Then we could replace the burned copy with the stolen one, and your dad doesn't ever have to know that you burned it!"

"Are you insane?" My voice rose with the force of the accusation. "Sneak into the Meathead Public Library? How are we going to do that?"

"Easy," he responded with a shrug. "We fly there on our dragons. It's located on South Meathead Island, and that's not far from Berk."

"That place is one of the most heavily guarded I have ever seen in my life!"

"They've loosened security a bit, actually," Snotlout replied.

"Who cares?" I yelled, losing my temper. "Who cares if they've loosened security, the idea is mad! It's completely insane andâ€|andâ€|"

"And do you have any better ideas?" Snotlout asked quietly.

I hesitated for a long second. "No," I finally admitted.

The shadow of a triumphant smile flitted across my cousin's face. "Well, then, c'mon!"

"Alright," I conceded, grabbing my vest and beginning to buckle it on as I swung myself up onto Toothless' back. He lowered his head slightly to help me. "C'mon, get up here." I held out a hand for Snotlout's.

"Wait, it's just going to be us?" Snotlout looked surprised.

"Of course it's just going to be us," I replied testily. "What, did you think I was going to call up the whole village of Berk and say, 'hey, look, Hiccup the Useless screwed up again, it's what he does best, can you help meâ€'"

"Hiccup the Useless?" Snotlout interrupted, clearly confused.

I shook my head. "Never mind. It's just the nickname I had on Outcast Island, it's not important."

The look on Snotlout's face was close to pitying, but thankfully, he recovered quickly. "I just didn't realize it was going to be us. I thought we'd at least take the others along."

"What, Astrid and Fishlegs and the twins?" I twisted around in the saddle to look up at him, pulling him up onto my dragon's back. He sat precariously, as if afraid that touching me would infect him with some contagious disease.

He nodded in response to my question. "Yeah. I mean, they pretty much go with us everywhere whenever we do things like thisâ€"

"It's different with you." I tried not to let the jealousy I felt at his carefree words show. "The others, they like you."

"They like you, too," Snotlout poked me in the shoulder.

I shook my head. "They don't even know me. C'mon, bud."

Toothless walked out of the forge, only snapping open his wings when we reached Thor's Beach, and the edge of the tide. We soared up into the pink and purple sky, a few evening stars peeking out from behind the thin, vaporous clouds hiding the darkest part of the sky from view.

The night air was cold on our faces as we flew, farther and farther, and Toothless began speeding up, making Snotlout start muttering obscene things under his breath as he looked around for something to hold onto.

"It's okay, we're almost there," I told him as we swooped low over the island. I crouched down in the saddle, tugging Snotlout down with me. The Driller Dragons that guarded the Library were sleeping now, their drills whirring softly, glinting in the cool moonlight. The Meathead Warriors who stood guard were nowhere to be found, and I couldn't help but feel glad that we were entering by night instead of by day. The chance that one of these dragons would wake up, look up and see us, was very slim, especially considering Toothless' ability to blend into the night. I steered us gently over to the sturdiest-looking window ledge I could find â€" which wasn't saying much, seeing as all the ledges were rather old, and the cement was breaking off in large parts.

"Shh," I cautioned my cousin as I slid slowly from Toothless' back onto the window ledge. I didn't look down, but I wasn't scared; I didn't want to get distracted by the Driller Dragons. I knew, if I fell, Toothless would catch me.

Snotlout, who had no such reassurance, was white as a sheet when he realized what he had to do. I slid easily into the Library and offered him my hand. "C'mon," I coaxed, "it's easy, and I'll pull you through."

I tried not to be impatient with Snotlout, but I could tell Toothless was having trouble staying in the air, and the instant Snotlout was off his back, my dragon had dived through the window himself and landed smartly on the floorâ€|only to instantly sprint back up again,

shrieking in alarm and displeasure.

"Bud?" I tried to keep my voice low as I approached him. "Bud, what's wrong?" But glancing down at the floor, I thought I knew. Millions of tiny, bright red dragons were running across the carpet, but they paid Toothless no mind when he hesitantly landed again.

"It's okay, bud," I soothed, patting his head. "They're just Itchyworms and they can't bite through a dragon's skin."

"What about boots?" Snotlout asked, looking down at the tiny dragons nervously.

"No, I don't think so," I responded reassuringly. "Well, actually, I don't know if they can bite through anything â€" the only times I've ever had a swarm on me was when Brandt shoved them down my shirt. It was kind of unpleasant, I couldn't stop scratching for hours. We're safe, though."

"Who's Brandt?" Snotlout asked.

"Kid on Outcast Island," I replied promptly. "One of Halfdan's lot. Anyway, you don't have to worry about them. The author was Professor Yobbish, I think? What was the book titled?"

"Erâ€|they've redone the place since I was here last," Snotlout finally admitted. "I don't recognize anything, and it's done in a kind of maze now. Iâ€|I think the Ys were over here, last I checkedâ€|" he moved hopefully to the left, but sighed and shook his head. "No dice. We're in the As, and the Ys will probably be at the very back."

I rolled my eyes. "Great thinking. C'mon, let's get going."

"Was that sarcastic?"

"It's me," I responded sharply, walking down one end of the row labeled with Bs, and turning down the next labeled with the same letter. "What do you think?"

Not appeased by my answer, Snotlout huffed in annoyance and then covered his mouth. "Oops," he whispered. "We don't want to wake the Driller Dragons, huh?"

"No," I shook my head. "Definitely not. C'mon, we're in the Cs now."

Snotlout hurried after me, and the steady, soft whine of the sleeping Driller Dragons was comforting, knowing that they were still asleep. We walked through the maze of books together, softly calling out letters to each other as we passed them. I wanted to split up and look for the book on my own, but Snotlout was either afraid of being left alone or afraid of leaving me alone; if it was the former, I really couldn't blame him.

The place wasn't exactly scary to me, but there was a certain eeriness to the thick silence all the same. Wait. I stopped in my tracks. Silence?

"The Driller Dragons," I said through white lips, stopping right in

front of the Gs.

"What?" Snotlout asked uncomprehendingly.

"Theâ€|the Driller Dragons, they've woken up." My voice was shaking almost as badly as my hands. "C'mon, let's find the book and get out of here, quick!"

"Damn it." I heard Snotlout's heavy breathing from somewhere to my right, but the darkness was so dense that I could see only his silhouette whenever we passed by a window and he was temporarily illuminated by the moonlight. "I should have thought of thatâ€|I heard Driller Dragons can sense intruders, but even in their sleepâ€|?"

"And you didn't think to tell me this, why?" I demanded, as we sped past the Hs.

"Well, I thought they'd be asleep!"

"You're a royal idiot," I struggled to keep my voice low, yet anger still colored my tone. "Honestly, it's almost as if you wanted me to come here, you wanted us to get killedâ€|!"

"No, I didn't!" Snotlout's eyes widened. "I didn't know how dangerous it would be, I really didn't! I just thought that you were nervous about telling your dad about the book, so I thoughtâ€|"

"Well, next time, keep your thoughts to yourself," I said shortly as we stopped in front of the Js to catch our breath.

For a moment, both of us stood panting in the dark, in the silence, and thenâ€|

"Do you thinkâ€|" Snotlout sounded nervous now. "Do you think the Driller Dragons are actually inside the Library yet?"

I didn't know, I couldn't know for sure, and just as I opened my mouth to tell Snotlout so, there was a great crash and a horrible, piercing whining noise. This noise doubled in volume and strength by the second, making me wince as a nasty headache started.

I put a hand to my head, and Snotlout had gone white again.

"Okay, c'mon," I urged him, keeping my eyes closed tightly shut against the pain, "let's go, and be quiet about it, there's a chance that they won't find us."

Snotlout took a few slow steps forward and, when the movements did not bring the wrath of a thousand angry Driller Dragons upon him, he seemed a bit braver, for he quickened his pace.

"Be quiet!" I called after him pleadingly as I struggled to keep pace with his long strides, practically running past the Ks, Ls, Ms and Ns to get to the Os.

"It's okay, I don't think they can hear me," he hissed to me, turning suddenly to walk down the Qs.

Just as I was about to allow myself to relax a little, I heard a

sudden hissing, scraping noise and stopped dead once more. Snotlout obviously heard it, too, because he stopped walking as well.

"That didn't sound like Driller Dragons," he ventured, sounding nervous but hopeful.

"It wasn't."

Both Snotlout and I jumped and looked at each other "that voice had not come from one of us.

Out of the shadows stepped a tall, thin man with a long, dirty gray beard and two glinting swords at his side. "It was me," he added, as if the situation called for any further explanation.

"Yeah, we got that," I piped up, surprising even myself.

He scowled, drawing both swords at the same time.

Lucky, I thought to myself. I didn't even have the strength to lift one sword at a time.

"What are you doing in my Library?" he demanded angrily.

"Um" Snotlout hesitated, glancing at me for help. "Seeing the sights?" He ended it with a question mark.

"But there's not much sight to see here, actually," I added hurriedly, "so if you could just let us get going, we'll be on our way"

"You're trying to steal a book," the Librarian accused, holding his swords higher and inhaling deeply through his nose. "I smell deception and falsehood in the very air I'm breathing " you have come to steal, not to see."

"You know, it's not actually stealing, if you stole it from the Viking tribes first," I replied.

"Hiccup, shut up!" Snotlout hissed in my ear.

"What? It's true!"

It was during my temporary distraction that the Librarian seized his chance: he raised his swords and charged at both of us. Snotlout disappeared behind a bookshelf and I ducked before remembering the floor was covered in Itchyworms. Straightening back up instantly, I plucked one of the little guys off my neck, where he was trying to gnaw through my collar. I flicked him away, back onto the floor and dodged the next slice of the Librarian's sword.

Snotlout, perhaps having realized I was not right behind him, appeared from behind the bookshelf again and grabbed one of the heavier books, throwing it at the Librarian. The older Viking gasped as it landed on the floor, its aim off by a fraction. "My book!" he bellowed, his eyes gleaming with what appeared to be tears for his precious book. He stooped to pick it up, actually kissing the cover and dropping one of his swords to place it carefully back upon the shelf.



This was the opening we had been waiting for: Snotlout darted forward and grabbed the Librarian's dropped sword, holding it awkwardly as he tried to get a feel of the weapon. The Librarian turned, dropping the book back upon the shelf as he saw Snotlout had grabbed up his sword. He scowled, drawing his other one. "You're going to pay for that, boy."

But seeing his reaction to watching one book topple gave me an idea. Squinting my eyes shut and whispering a silent apology to all the books, though I knew they couldn't hear me, because I was almost as attached to reading as the Librarian was, I gave one of the bookshelves a strong shove. The shelf wobbled, shook from side to side and then fell over, a sea of books descending from the shelves and covering the floor. The Itchyworms scrambled for cover, and the Librarian looked horrified. "My books!" he shrieked, turning his attention from the fight.

Snotlout bonked him on the head with the sword, sending him down to the ground — the Librarian fell to the floor, not moving, but breathing and clearly unconscious.

"Is he alright?" I scrambled over the fallen shelf to get a look at him.

"Who cares?" Snotlout muttered. "He was just trying to kill us!"

"C'mon, help me move him," I picked up the Librarian by one end of his sleeve, hauling him into a rough sitting position.

"Why?" Snotlout looked bewildered.

"If the Driller Dragons come in this room, he'll get trampled, they won't be able to see him. One of the bookshelves will be good, do you think?"

"I'd let the dragons trample him, personally," Snotlout mumbled, but he grabbed the man off my hands and stuffed him unceremoniously onto one of the shelves. "C'mon, let's go, he's safe."

And then — I guess we hadn't realized how much racket we'd been making — the door at the other end of the hall flew open with a great crash and several Driller Dragons burst in, looking grumpy and their drillers whirring sinisterly.

I gave something between a yelp and a shriek, scrambling away from them as fast as I could and grabbing Snotlout's shirtsleeve as I went. Snotlout stumbled along behind me, huffing and puffing. "Oh, Thor — Oh, Thor —" he was shaking as I shouldered open another door.

"Be quiet, will you?" I could hear the whine of the drills getting louder and I slammed the door shut, knowing that would bar them for only moments and flew down the next hall before skidding to a stop and adding, "Here we are, c'mon!"

I knelt down next to the Ys, ignoring the Itchyworms that tried to bite through my trouser leg. "Yoah — Yotty — Yob — Yobby —"

"You're thinking about this now?" Snotlout's voice was unnaturally

high-pitched.

"Shh!" I cautioned as I grabbed the book with Yobbish's name off the shelf and sprinting towards the door at the other end of the hall.

"They're catching upâ€|" Snotlout insisted in a very eerie manner as he ran alongside me.

"No, they're not!" I replied stubbornly. "Just keep going!"

I couldn't help feeling slightly resentful towards Snotlout, for having this idea in the first place.

"Through there!" Snotlout pointed to a door leading off to the side and we both ran in gratefully â€" Driller Dragons had a hard time changing direction.

But as soon as I was inside, I began regretting my rash decision, wishing I was still running. Snotlout must have thought the door led to another hallway, but it didn't â€" it was a dead end, a tiny room with nothing but darkness as our companions.

"Oh, Thorâ€|" I moaned softly to myself, sinking to my knees and then to my butt on the ground. I thought of the Itchyworms for a moment, but there were none here, and besides that, I didn't care much. I just wanted out of here.

"Are you okay?" Snotlout was standing over me, watching me with evident concern.

I nodded jerkily. "Y-yes. I just want to get out of here, Iâ€|Iâ€|" I glanced around at the tight little quarters and shuddered, feeling ashamed and embarrassed of my inability to deal with things like a proper Viking. "I don't like small spaces."

"Oh." Snotlout looked very awkward at this. "Well, it's okay, Hiccup, I meanâ€|" But he suddenly fell silent, and I knew why: the whine of the Driller Dragons was getting louder once again. It reached its piercing volume once more, and as we both put our hands over our ears, I registered that they must be right outside the door.

After what seemed an eternity of the drilling sound boring into my head, the dragons moved on, past the door.

"That," Snotlout let out a shaky breath as the noises grew fainter and fainter, "that was pure luck."

I nodded vigorously, taking to my feet once more. Elation about evading the Driller Dragons was quickly fading, to be replaced by fear once more as I registered that I was still trapped in a tiny space. "Do you think they're gone for good?"

Snotlout put an ear to the door and listened while I tried to steady my breathing and keep my panic quiet. "They must be," he mumbled. "But there are more coming, I thinkâ€|"

"It doesn't matter, we have to get out of here," I tried my best to keep my tone calm, but my voice was teetering on hysterical from my desire to get out, and I could tell that Snotlout noticed.

"We'll be okay, Hiccup," he assured me easily. "I just think we should wait a couple more minutes. If more Driller Dragons come this way, we'll stay here until we're sure the coast is clear."

I nodded, drumming my fingers a little impatiently on one of the bookshelves as I waited for Snotlout to give the call.

Toothless must have sensed my fear, because he started crooning softly, rubbing his head against my hip to calm me.

"Shh," Snotlout cautioned. "They'll hear you."

But as he reached out to steady my shaking fingers, I caught sight of something that distracted me completely from the small space. It was a book that seemed to emit a kind of silvery glow, though the spine was not colorful: it was old and yellowed with age, spotted with water. But it was the author's name that caught my eye.

HICCUP it proclaimed in huge letters, and at first my hand jumped to pull it out, my eyes sliding down the spine. And then I saw the rest of the name. Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Second. I had never given much thought to my name before, partly because I'd always assumed that it was just Hiccup the Treacherous, nothing extraordinary. When Stoick had finally addressed the matter of my name, the fact that I was too old for him to change it and I probably wouldn't want him to anyway, I had never really put much thought into the matter when he told me that my name was now Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third. It didn't matter much to me what I was called anymore; Halfdan's feeble taunts about "Hiccup the Useless" had long since lost their sting, and I was too old for cruel nicknames to bother me anyway.

But now I began thinking of my name, and I realized that if I was the third boy named Hiccup, that there probably was a first Hiccup and a second Hiccup. I pulled the book off the shelf. "This person has almost the same name as me," I whispered, mesmerized by it, feeling as if I was holding something precious and magical in my hands. This was a book written by my ancestor, who shared blood with me. Ever since I had discovered that my supposed family of Alvin was a lie, I had been desperate to learn as much as I could about the family I had lost, and here was the chance.

"Look!" I couldn't quiet my excitement any longer when I spotted the cover of the book; pointing eagerly at it, I read aloud to Snotlout, "A Hero's Guide to Deadly Dragons!"

Snotlout gaped at it for a moment. "Wait, that's your ancestor?"

"Has to be!" I responded, opening the book a little wider to read. However, the bookshelf suddenly made a loud clicking noise and all three of us froze, staring at it.

With a quiet whirring, it slid completely away from the wall, sinking into the other side and revealing a long, dusty tunnel. There were dragons within the tunnel, and at first I thought they were sleeping, but poor things, someone had come through and slaughtered them; the blood that served as their eternal beds had long since dried. I glanced up for an instant and saw words written in Norse runes over

the entrance: THE DRAGON WHISPERER'S WAY.

"The Dragon Whisperer's Way" Snotlout repeated, having read it as well. I could hear the confusion in his voice.

"Who's the Dragon Whisperer?" I asked in a hushed voice.

"I don't know," Snotlout replied uneasily. "But something tells me that this place was meant for him."

"I think it was meant for Hiccup the Second," I commented. "Think about it, the bookshelf only changed when I took the book off the shelf."

"Are you sure we should go through?" Snotlout asked quietly.

I heard a soft whirring noise coming from somewhere in the distance: the Driller Dragons were still searching the Library, still looking for us.

"I think" I involuntarily tightened my grip on the book as I spoke. "Yes. I think we should. C'mon." I expected the tunnel to be even worse than the tiny room, but I was surprised; the thick, twisting chamber was rather large and airy once I actually sat at the top, and I could see a bit of moonlight down at the very end.

"I'll go first," I added, "and I'll call up to you if it's safe and you and Toothless go down together. I'll try and be quick, but I don't know where this leads."

"Okay." Snotlout looked rather concerned for me, but I wasn't frightened; I couldn't help thinking that, crazy as it was, this tunnel was meant for me somehow, and that if I went down it, I would be safe.

I gave myself a push with my hands, speeding down the blue tunnel. There was no wind here, but my hair flew back into my eyes all the same. Impatiently brushing it away, I came to a complete standstill on a tiny window ledge, throwing my arms out for balance. "It's okay!" I called up to Snotlout. "It's okay, but don't come down with Toothless, it ends on a window and it's too small for both of you at the same time!"

"Okay!"

Snotlout came speeding down the chute seconds later, and only a minute after, Toothless followed.

"C'mon," I replied, jumping onto Toothless' back. "Time to go."

"You're taking the book?" Snotlout sounded confused.

I hugged it slightly closer to my chest, feeling both defiant and slightly embarrassed. "Yes. Why?"

"Just curious," he assured me. "We'd better go."

"Yeah. C'mon, Toothless."

The dragon obediently took to the air, and I pressed my heel down in the pedal, snapping out his tailfin.

"I hope your father doesn't kill me," Snotlout remarked, after spending most of the ride in silence.

"Why would he do that? It's me who burned the book."

"Yeah, but I endangered his precious little boy."

My cheeks colored. "He will not say that. I'm sure that nobody's looking for me, so I can just throw the burned book away, go back into the forge and pretend that I was there the whole time."

"Well, I hope for my sake that that plan works," Snotlout responded.

"Don't worry, it will," I promised him, steering lower as we neared the Isle of Berk. I could see the moonlight illuminating the trees waving in the night breeze.

"Should we land in the forest?" I whispered. "I don't want people to ask questions."

"No, get as close to the forge as you can," Snotlout directed. "The last thing I feel like doing is trudging ten miles uphill just to get the freaking village. I'm not doing it."

I smiled slightly at his words, though I knew he meant them. "Yeah, okay, I guess." I conceded, dropping down as we neared the forge.

I landed by the back door, sliding off Toothless before we even hit the ground and scrambling to the forge entrance. But before I got any farther, I heard the low murmur of voices from within the backroom.

"What happened to that?"

"It's burnedâ€|"

My stomach clenched as I recognized the voices, and I turned fearfully to Snotlout. "They found the book."

"What?" Snotlout jumped off Toothless' back and dusted himself off, reaching out for the door handle.

I winced, readying myself for their tirade of fury as the door swung open.

"Hiccup!" Stoick dropped the book and picked me up in a bone-crushing hug. "Where were you? We were looking all over, and we couldn't find youâ€|"

"I'm sorry," I gasped as he released me. My ribs protested with each breath and I felt certain that he had bruised them. "I'm really sorry about the book, but, umâ€|I-I got a copy, see?" I hesitantly held out the Professor Yobbish book.

Stoick looked for a long moment from me to the book and back again. "Butâ€|but what, how? I meanâ€|?"

"Hiccup was nervous that you'd be mad at him," Snotlout volunteered, stepping forward.

"So, youâ€¦don't tell me." Stoick closed his eyes.

"But I got it!" I added. "I burned it, and I'm really, really sorry but I got it back, I got a copy, see?" I handed it to him for the second time, but he didn't take it.

"You didn't have to do that," Stoick replied quietly. "You could have just come to me and told me that you'd damaged the book. I wouldn't have been angry."

"Well, it doesn't matter." I frowned, frustrated with him to no end. He could get furious with me at the slightest things, but burning one of his books brought nothing? No wrath? "It doesn't matter, I've got the book again. Here it is, if you still want it." I dropped it on the floor in front of him instead and started to exit the forge.

"Where are you going?" Gobber demanded â€" I think he was really only saying this in Stoick's place, because Stoick looked a bit like he was having trouble processing what I'd done.

"I'm going to bed," I replied, sidestepping the blacksmith and reaching out for the door. "I've spent the night being chased by Driller Dragons and the Hairy Scary Librarian and I think an Itchyworm is down in my shirt. I want to sleep this experience off."

### 103. To Say The Words

Untold

#### Chapter 103 - To Say The Words

Summary: Hiccup and Stoick might have a good relationship, but there are still three words that Hiccup doesn't dare say.

\*\*A/N: Guess who thought of this at three o' clock in the morning? Yeah, that's right. Ugh. Anyway, I'm sorry about last chapter's randomness. It was like a random passageway, a random and creepy Librarian and stuff xD it was really bad. Anyway. I hope you enjoy this one. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"So, what do you think, Toothless?" I opened the new tailfin, then closed it again so he could have a look. "This one should be stronger than the last one I made, and it'll help us fly even faster, I think."<p>

My dragon looked at it for a moment, as if he was unsure how much he wanted to know what it was, but the moment he heard the word 'fly', his ears perked up and he started practically jumping up and down in excitement.

"We went flying this morning," I responded, but I was smiling all the

same as I knelt to detach the old tailfin and buckle on the new one. "C'mon, though, we'll try it out once Gobber closes up the forge for the night."

Toothless looked at me pleadingly, but I avoided his gaze. "It won't be long â€" he's coming back in a couple minutes, and I expect he'll close up shop then. C'mon, just be patient."

Patient was not a word in Toothless' vocabulary. He sighed and glared at me as he flopped down on the floor, and I rested my head against his back for a moment, gazing up at the ceiling. For a moment, it was like we were thrown back into the past and it was my first week on Berk all over again: me and Toothless in the forge, both aching to go flying and Gobber somewhere away from us. Nobody could penetrate the invisible barrier that I had put up between myself and the world, except Toothless, not back then. I reached up to scratch under Toothless' chin and he purred in pleasure, leaning into my touch.

The door to the forge opened, and both of us sat upright, sharing excited looks. The door closed again, but there were two sets of heavy footsteps, one uneven.

"See?" I told Toothless confidently, striding towards the curtain to exit the room. "Gobber's back already, and I bet he's closing up now."

Toothless leapt to his feet, hot on my heels, but as I reached to pull open the curtain, I heard Gobber speaking, not to me, but in a quiet voice to the other person who had entered the forge. I recognized Stoick's low murmur of a reply, and I turned back to Toothless with a shrug. "They're probably trying to have a private conversation."

Just as I turned back to keep playing with my dragon, however, I heard my name amongst the muttering outside, and I straightened back up instantly, cocking my head and listening intently.

"Just give him time, Stoick," Gobber was saying softly. "He's only known you for eight months, he doesn't know what to think. Chances are you overwhelmed him with the information that you were his blood father, and you just have to give him time and let him adjust."

"I think it's me," Stoick responded quietly, so quietly that I had to strain my ears to hear. "It's my fault. It wasn't that he was overwhelmedâ€" I think he's still upset aboutâ€" about what happened when we found outâ€" that he was from Outcast Island."

"Really, Stoick, he said he forgave you for that," Gobber said, sounding frustrated and upset at the same time. "If he's still hanging onto thatâ€"

"Then I'll know he's only human," Stoick interrupted. "I just can't see how anyone could forgive what I did to him, Gobber. And quite apart from forgiveness, I don't thinkâ€" Iâ€" he hesitated before continuing. "I don't think he loves me. Not the way I love him. The way he talks sometimes, it's like he sees Berk â€" and me â€" as this vaguely interesting detour on a journey or something, and that he plans to leave soon. You heard him after he lost his leg, he couldn't wait to leave!"

"Speaking of giving him time!" And now Gobber sounded intensely frustrated when he spoke. "He does love you, I'm sure, but he's a sixteen-year-old boy who's lived with Alvin the Treacherous his whole life. Of course he's not bowling you over to say he loves you, Stoick, give him time."

I pulled away from the curtain and turned to Toothless, who was still listening, apparently rather interested.

I bit my lip. "C'mon, bud," I whispered, "let's go try out your tail."

\* \* \*

><p>Even after I got back from the flight and sorted out my thoughts about what I'd heard, I still felt awkward around Stoick, unable to think of anything to say to him. Dinner between us was an entirely silent time, and it was with relief that I peeled away from the table to go up to my room.<p>

"Good night," Stoick called up to me as I walked up the stairs, breaking the silence and clearing our bowls off the table.

"'Night," I muttered distractedly, as Toothless nudged me impatiently up the steps.

"I love you."

I froze where I stood, the conversation in the forge still fresh in my mind. I hesitated for a beat longer before whispering, "I love you, too."

I didn't dare glance back to see if he'd heard.

## 104. That's My Son

Untold

### Chapter 104 - That's My Son

Summary: Hiccup and Stoick get their father/son portrait painted.

\*\*A/N: Sorry for not updating for so long, guys - in case you're wondering, I started working on original works and I didn't want to go back to fanfiction. But I owed it to you guys to keep going so...have some feels? :3\*\*

\*\*P.S: THIS IS A CONTINUATION OF VIKINGS DON'T PART IV. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>When Stoick left the room, I noticed that my new clothes had been spread out on the bed, on top of my blankets, a little wrinkled because I'd moved around in my sleep and when he'd started tickling me. I stared down at the clothing that Stoick had sewn for me for a second, picking up the rust red tunic by the sleeve and running my thumb over the wrist. I knew I should have just gotten up and gone



downstairs, the way Stoick wanted. I mean, he'd been waiting for this fatherson portrait for a long time. He'd been trying to sway me for at least two weeks, and none of his arguments had worked exceptâ€¦the dreaded guilt tactic.

I winced as I remembered it. I had been standing in the tiny wooden kitchen across from him, my arms folded firmly over my chest and my mind bent completely on one thing: getting him to drop his stupid idea. He had been making our dinner by that time, stirring whatever was in the cauldron a little quicker than usual because of his nervousness, and I knew he was thinking up a new tack.

After a few long minutes of silence, he relaxed his grip on the wooden spoon he was using and heaved a deep sigh. "I guess that's it, then. You're definitely not having your portrait painted?"

"Go have yours if you like, but I can think of a thousand things I'd rather be doing with my time," I snapped. In truth, I'd been acting that way because all I could think about was those years that I'd believed Alvin was my real father, and how much I wanted to avoid all the stupid chieftain father/son functions, if only to avoid thinking too much about Alvin and everything he'd stolen from me.

"Okay," Stoick agreed quietly.

I felt rather unsettled by this, but also a bit pleased too; had I finally worn down the most stubborn man I had ever met? Had he finally decided to respect my understandable boundaries?

"I just thought we could get the portrait painted together, because," he sounded unbearably sad when he spoke now. "Because I haven't had a family for sixteen years. I dreamed of the day when my son would stand beside me and get his portrait painted, butâ€¦" his voice trailed off.

I flinched slightly, suddenly feeling like a total jerk. I hadn't even thought of Stoick in this at all; I hadn't really considered that he might want this so badly for a simple and innocent reason, because he'd never gotten it before. I stared at the wooden floor, hands clasped in front of me as I fought a battle inside my head. It was true that Stoick probably just wanted to get the stupid portrait painted because he'd wanted it for sixteen years and I felt really, really bad for not realizing that before. Every father/son activity had always been associated with Alvin in my mind; it was all the things we had never done together, the things I had secretly hoped we would do together. I guess I'd never considered letting myself do anything of the sort with Stoick and now the prospect was staring me in the face.

And I realized how incredibly selfish I had been for not thinking of this before, never expressing an interest in this, how much this must have hurt Stoick. I winced, mumbling the inevitable words.

"Okayâ€¦I'll do itâ€¦"

"Really?" Stoick turned slowly on the spot to face me, like he hardly dared to believe it.

"Yesâ€¦" I muttered, already regretting my decision but refusing to take it back.

Stoick's face softened into a smile. "Thank you, Hiccup."

And now here I was, sitting on my bed with the clothes he had sewn me in my hands. With a sigh, I ripped off the green shirt, pulling it over in my head and tossing it onto the floor. I pulled on the red one, grabbing for the leggings and tying the belt around my waist. When I was fully dressed, I headed downstairs, feeling certain that I couldn't be regretting my decision any more than I was then. Everything within me was a tight knot of anxiety as I thought about the day ahead. It was just a stupid portrait, and it was making me freak out. I tried to calm down and eat at least a couple bites of eggs, but I gave up when I realized I was having trouble swallowing, and Stoick was kind of staring at me across the table.

"What?" I demanded, probably sounding more aggressive than the occasion warranted.

"Are you alright?" he asked worriedly. "You look pale. Are you sick?"

No. I shook my head. I felt sick, but I knew that was just from nervousness. I didn't want to freak out and ruin this day for Stoick, though, not when it had finally come for him, so I forced myself to smile at him. Who knew? Maybe this day could even turn out to be a little bit fun.

On the walk to the Great Hall, Snotlout waved at me, but apparently he knew that if Stoick was with me, I didn't have time to chat because he didn't try to stop and make me; he just kept walking with Astrid and the others. I tried not to envy him too much. As much as I wanted to make Stoick happy, the prospect of the portrait loomed ever nearer, and I really didn't want to freak out in front of him. I'd finally met my birth father, after sixteen years without him, and I was not letting him think I was weak or that I couldn't be normal for twenty-four hours.

When we reached the Hall, I found Bucket waiting for us with several cans of paint and a plain wooden shield on a stand. He smiled vacantly at us as we got settled, but he didn't say much.

"Bucket?" I hissed in surprise to Stoick. "He's painting our portrait?"

"That's not a problem, is it?" The blonde man asked cheerfully; he had somehow crept up right behind me and I jumped slightly.

"N-noâ€|" I stammered. "I didn't realize you could paint, that's all."

"He's the best," Stoick assured me.

Bucket flushed with pride as he came in front of us, wiping a bit of dust off my shoulder and picking a stray leaf out of my hair. "Stand up straight, won't you, lad?"

"Sorry," I apologized, trying to look a little taller. For good measure, I tried to puff out my chest, but this did no good.

"Shoulders back," Bucket coached as he went back over to the plain shield, his canvas. "It won't do any good if you hunch, laddie."

"Iâ€¦I don't hunch," I replied, slightly offended.

"Yes, you do," he insisted absentmindedly, picking up a paintbrush and dipping it in the orange. He brought the slightly dripping brush to the canvas and made a streak over it. Of course it was hidden from my view, so I couldn't see what it looked like.

"You need to stand tall, lad," he continued, still on this. "It won't do the picture any good if you're trying to skulk in the shadows."

I rolled my eyes, but I tried to draw myself up to my full height. Maybe Bucket was right, and I did hunch a bit, because standing up straight took a lot of effort and it increased my nervousness. I kept feeling like Stoick was going to drag me back into my original, slouching position, but he didn't.

"Very good," Bucket congratulated me, now sticking his brush in the purple.

It took so long that I got kind of fidgety and nervous, not to mention my shoulders started to ache. Maybe I did hunch a little, but it was way more comfortable than this. Even if this did make me feel a little taller. I watched as Bucket traced another line on the shield, stood back, and admired his work. "That's it," he announced, after a long pause.

I let my shoulders relax with a sigh of relief, and Stoick smiled. "Thank you, Bucket. C'mon, then, Hiccup."

"Wait, isn't he gonna show us the painting?" I asked, not moving from my spot.

"No," Stoick responded, a laugh in his voice, as if he found the question silly. "The painting is unveiled at a village-wide ceremony, everyone knows that."

"Oh." I mulled over this piece of information. "What if you want to keep your portrait private?"

"Who would want to do that?" he replied, leading me out of the Great Hall.

I didn't respond, but I knew the answer.

\* \* \*

><p>"Here it is, son." Stoick gave me a kind of one-armed hug around the shoulder, a proud grin tugging at his lips. "This is our legacy."<p>

I swallowed uncomfortably, watching as everybody filed into the Hall. I wasn't even really sure why I was so nervous; I just felt it was kind of impertinent, everybody wanting to see the painting at once, wanting to see what had been created out of those unimaginably long hours in the Great Hall.

Bucket waited until seemingly the whole village had gathered around and then, beaming, withdrew the purple cloth from over the painted shield.

I don't know what I was expecting, but I guess it wasn't what was really under the cloth.

There was Stoick, with one arm thrown around my shoulders, beaming proudly down at me. But my eyes traveled to the shoulders, which were broader than I remembered. And then there were the beefy arms and the broad torso, the tree-trunk legs. This was not me. I looked happy in the portrait, happier than I remembered feeling. I remembered feeling nervous and kind of upset. I didn't remember looking or feeling that happy.

My eyes traveled over the Viking physique again, the kind I'd always wanted to have. Of course. Of course Bucket had painted me like that. That was how a Viking, a son of a chief should look. That's probably how Stoick wanted his son to look. And instead he got stuck with me and he was so desperate that he took me anyway. I bit my lip to still it, just in case it threatened to tremble, and I started to slowly back away from the portrait. Had Stoick stepped in maybe and asked Bucket to beef me up a little? Maybe he knew that the closest he'd ever get to the son he really wanted was this 2D portrait, and he was determined to get it. Maybe he liked the painting better than the real me.

I managed to shove my way through the crowd, my head swirling with negative thoughts, my skin oddly numb. I made it all the way to the double doors before Stoick's voice carried to me. "Wait a minute, Bucket."

I stopped at the door, one hand resting on the wood.

"Why did you do this to Hiccup?"

"Why is the sky blue?" Bucket answered vaguely, adjusting the silver bucket atop his blonde head.

"No, Bucket, that's not my son."

"What are you talking about?"

"I mean, that doesn't look like Hiccup. He's shorter than that, and he doesn't have all that muscle."

My heart lifted just slightly in hope, and I hated it for doing so.

"You don't like it?" The blonde Viking looked crestfallen.

Stoick hesitated for a moment, and I knew he was considering sparing the other's feelings. "It's a good painting, Bucket, but it's inaccurate."

"I was trying to make him look like a proper Viking," Bucket replied.

"He is a proper Viking," Stoick said testily. "Even if he doesn't look the part."

I gazed across the room at Stoick " even though he wasn't looking at me, I kept staring at him, unsure if he had really said the words. My heart was pounding so hard it hurt, and when the last few words reached my ears, it felt like it was soaring in my chest.

"Then what do you want me to do?" Bucket demanded.

"I would like this to be redone, or I don't want it put on the wall at all," Stoick replied.

Bucket looked it over for a moment. "That can be arranged, I s'pose."

## 105. Insensitive

Untold

### Chapter 105 - Insensitive

Summary: A Truth or Dare game takes an upsetting turn.

\*\*A/N: Well, it took awhile for us to reach this point, but it appears that Hiccup is finally trusting the teens! Or at least, he trusts Astrid, Snotlout and Tuffnut, a little, thanks to Gobber's urging xD but mostly he and Snotlout just have a kind of brother relationship going on: Snotlout's the older one who Hiccup looks up to, and Hiccup is the younger one whom Snotlout teases xD anyway, I'm done. Hope you all enjoy this chapter! Thank you for all the reviews! And please leave more xD xD\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Alright, Fishlegs! Truth or dare?"<p>

"Um"|"dare?"

The interest around the group heightened visibly; Tuffnut and Ruffnut leaned forward, identical evil grins on their faces, Snotlout raised his eyebrows hopefully, and Astrid crossed her arms over her chest, surveying the blonde boy thoughtfully. It was the first dare that Fishlegs had taken since the game began.

"Can I take this one?" Snotlout pleaded, sitting up on his knees and clasping his hands in Astrid's direction. "Please, please, please?"

Astrid didn't look happy, but to my surprise, she gave it up without a fight. "Alright, but if your dare sucks or if it's too mean, we're calling a do-over."

Fishlegs whimpered.

Snotlout grinned. "I dare you"|"to tell Stoick the Vast that his braids look lovely!"

"What?" Fishlegs squeaked. "I can't do that!"

"Sure you can!" Snotlout encouraged.

Though Stoick definitely wouldn't take something like that very well, I had to admit that he probably wouldn't be as bad as I'd envisioned two months or even one month ago. "Oh, c'mon, Fishlegs," I put in earnestly. "He really won't be that bad."

Fishlegs squeezed his eyes open, looking in my direction as if trying to find a sign that I was lying. "Promise?"

A small smile tugged at my lips. "Yes. Promise. Whose turn is it next?"

Fishlegs, still muttering complaints and prayers to the great god Thor under his breath, wandered off in search of Stoick.

Snotlout turned to me. "I think it's yours, actually, Hiccup. Truth or dare?"

I didn't like the gleam in his eyes when he said that last word. He was planning something horrible if I chose dare, I was sure of it. So I squeaked out nervously, "Truth!"

Snotlout's shoulders slumped visibly.

"Ooh, can I take this one?" Tuffnut put his hand in the air and began waving it all around. "Me, me, me!"

"Okay," Snotlout relented with a sigh. "I had a great dare picked out and everything."

"Use it on Astrid," I suggested, earning me a blue-eyed glare from aforesaid girl. "Now, Tuff, what's your question for me?"

"What is the worst thing that Alvin the Treacherous ever did to you?"

My heart skipped innumerable beats and my palms began to sweat as I clenched my hands into fists. "Wh-what? What are you talking about?"

Tuffnut was watching me with avid interest. "Everyone knows about how you stood up to Alvin the Treacherous before you came here, and he never lets anyone defy him without consequences. What's the worst thing he did to you for it?"

"Uhâ€¦Iâ€¦" I sat there, frozen, my hands shaking, and instantly, the instinct that Stoick had tried to gently ease out of me for the past two months resurfaced. I rose to my feet and bolted, tearing across the arena and heading for the forest, even though I knew I should have gone somewhere else, where I knew the terrain better. At the moment, I didn't care. I plunged into the first line of trees, my heart pounding crazily in my chest. I knew what the worst thing Alvin the Treacherous had ever done to me was, but that didn't make it any easier to say aloud. I hated myself for going cold whenever the man's name was even mentioned.

I was a thousand miles away from him, he couldn't hurt me, yet he still terrified me. I was still scared of him. Would I ever learn to shut up and take things like a man?

It was so stupid and weak that a silly little game of Truth or Dare (or, as Fishlegs called it, "Interrogation or Abuse") should set me off so easily. I kicked a few tiny pebbles out of my way, watching them roll off the path and into the grass. Now that I was safely away from the prodding questions and curious looks, I allowed myself to slow down a bit. I tried to tell myself to relax as I sagged against a tree, scooting down to my butt with my knees pulled up to my chest, my back against the trunk.

Only now did Toothless approach me, crooning gently and nudging my arm. He had been napping in the arena, but he was a light sleeper and of course he must have heard me flipping out. I sighed, scratching him under the chin and rubbing him on the nose. "I'm okay, bud, I'm okay."

My dragon didn't look entirely convinced, but at that moment, there were footsteps, a couple pairs of them, coming this way. I was instantly on my feet again, one hand on the tree trunk, poised to run again if need be. Toothless started growling softly in the direction of the intruders. I expected it to be one of the adult Vikings from the village, out for a morning stroll, but when the bushes parted, it was only the teens. Which, in my opinion, was way worse.

Mastering the urge to run again, I straightened a little, resting one hand on Toothless' head. I could stay calm against their barrage of questions this time, if Toothless was by my side.

"Hiccup!" It was Tuffnut who came forward, his cheeks pink and his gray gaze resting on his boots. "I'm sorry for asking an insentâ€¦insencâ€¦insensiâ€¦."

"Insensitive," Astrid hissed, loudly enough for me to hear.

"Insensitive question," the blonde finished, looking relieved that Astrid had taken the word off his hands. "I didn't think it would hurt yourâ€¦yourâ€¦feelings." He winced a little on the last word, and as I looked from him to Astrid, I knew Astrid must have talked him into apologizing.

"Uhâ€¦" I blushed, now, too. "I-it's alright, don't worry about it."

"I won't ask you about Outcast Island again," Tuffnut mumbled shamefacedly.

The words made me think of what Gobber had said to me in the forge a couple weeks ago, when I'd heard the word 'outcast' and frozen completely.

"\_Lad, you need to talk to someone about what happened to you," he ventured carefully, keeping his gaze fixed on his hammer prosthetic. "It's not good for you to keep everything all bottled up inside."\_

"\_Iâ€¦I do talk about it," I replied, surprised by the direction our conversation was taking. "I mean, Toothless and Iâ€¦"\_

"\_I meant with a human being, Hiccup," Gobber interrupted gently. "Not Toothless. Toothless was there for you when it happened, but he

already knows what went on and he probably wants to forget it as much as you do. Thing is, lad, you need to talk about it with someone else, someone who can help you." \_

"\_Why?" My own voice startled me; it sounded angry and defensive. "I'm finally away from it, I don't want to go dredging all the shit up again! It's over with, it's done now, I don't understand why I should have to talk about it with anyone!" \_

\_Gobber sighed. "Okay, Hiccup," he relented quietly.\_

I met Tuffnut's gaze, realizing I hadn't spoken for several long minutes. I remembered the look on his face when he'd asked me the question, the look that had made me freak out. It had been full of fascination, a kind of morbid curiosity. Now he was apologetic, whether Astrid had kicked him into being so, or whether he'd come to his senses on his own.

"It's okay," I responded quietly.

"Do you want come back to the arena with us, or just hang out here?"

"Uhâ€¦"

Toothless nudged my palm encouragingly, and I nodded slightly. "I'llâ€¦I'll come back with you guysâ€¦if you still want me there, I mean."

"'Course we do!" Snotlout responded excitedly, tugging on my wrist as he led our party back.

"Tuffnut." I called the other boy's name quietly as Snotlout, Astrid and Ruffnut sped ahead of us.

The blonde looked nervously at me, clearly awaiting a tirade of rage.

"Just so you know, you canâ€¦ask meâ€¦about Outcast Island sometimes." I swallowed. "If you want."

106. Alive

Untold

Chapter 106 - Alive

Summary: The important thing is that I'm alive.

\*\*A/N: Well, this was written off the prompt 'alive'. It came out angstier than I wanted it to xD xD but anyway. Shorter than I wanted, too. But anyway. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I'm not brave.<p>

I'm not strong.



I'm not smart.

I'm not tough, or muscular, or good-looking, like Halfdan. I'm not a bully, like his cronies. I'm not a proper Viking like Snotlout, and I'm not a born leader like Stoick. I'm not reallyâ€|anything. My flaws outweigh my good qualities, and sometimes I marvel at how even one person can love me, how Stoick can hug me without cringing, how Toothless can stand to stay around me when I've brought him nothing but trouble.

I have bad days and nights, days where all I think about are scars, and nights when I'm plagued by terror and pain.

But whether I'm worth it or not, whether I deserve to be loved or not, I'm still here. I've looked my fear in the eye countless times, and I have survived my worst nightmare. Although it was Toothless who kept me sane, I have to give myself some credit.

No matter what you think of me, no matter if you love me or hate me or fall somewhere in between, no matter if Alvin lays hands on me again, I have survived this far. And that's something to be proud of. Whether I have any redeeming qualities at all, damn it, I am alive.

## 107. Haunted House

Untold

### Chapter 107 - Haunted House

Summary: Snotlout persuades Hiccup to spend the night in a haunted house with him.

\*\*A/N: Happy Halloween! Sorry for my long absence, guys. I'm thinking of doing Nano Wrimo, so...Anyway, I'm going as Excellinor the witch for Halloween :D what about you guys? I hope you enjoy this chapter! Actually, I really do this time because I wrote it while my eyes were dilated xP anywayyyy please review! \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"What are you <em>wearing<em>, Gobber?!"

I," the blonde blacksmith declared grandly, though his mustache wasn't quite so blonde anymore, "am not Gobber anymore, foolish mortal!"

I looked him up and down, taking in his ridiculous outfit: his thick black cloak, fake fangs sticking out of his mouth, and blonde-turned-black mustache. "You're freaking me out," I decided. "Can you please just explain what you're doing?"

"This, Hiccup," Gobber swept the black cloak closer around himself and gave me his best sneer, "is my Halloween costume! I am Vadrika the vampire!"

The name, coupled with the costume, was just too much. I burst into laughter, and Gobber looked affronted.

"What are you laughing at?!" He demanded indignantly, letting his cloak drop again.

"You look like an idiot!" I managed through my laughter.

"I was going," Gobber replied testily, "to give you the day off, but after that reaction, young man, I think I'll just take it back!"

"The day off?" I frowned, my amusement vanishing. "But you gave me the day off just three days ago, Gobber."

"Vadrika!" The blacksmith insisted, his newly black mustache fluttering in annoyance.

"Oh, for Thor's sake, Vadrika, then," I rolled my eyes. "You gave me the day off just three days ago, why are you doing it again?"

"Halloween, of course!"

"What in the name of Loki is \_that\_?"

"It's a holiday here on Berk," Gobber began, but I interrupted.

"Another one? How many do you people need?"

"We don't have that many!" He said, stung. "Anyway, Halloween is the day of the year where all the people on Berk dress up, and the adults hand out candy to the kids. The kids go door-to-door asking for some, you see."

"So it's like begging, but in costume? No thanks."

"You've got it all wrong, lad," Gobber insisted. "It's not begging – the adults are expected to give it out, anyway. Except Mildew." He wrinkled his nose as he spoke. "And anyway, you don't have to dress up and go for candy if you don't want to. You can do something else to celebrate, like read a scary book, or something."

"I think I'll pass," I declined. "But is that day off still available?"

"Well, I don't know," the blacksmith huffed, crossing his arms. "Do I still look like an idiot?"

"Yes," I nodded. "But the truth hurts sometimes."

"Oh, alright! Get out of my sight, boy."

I grinned, rushing for the door with Toothless on my heels. "Thanks, Gobber!"

"Yeah, yeah!" He slammed the door shut behind me, and I turned to Toothless with an expectant grin on my face. Holiday or not, the sky was clear blue and calling to us, and the breeze was wonderful. Before we'd even made it three steps from the forge, however, I heard shouting not far off, and growing closer all the time. Normally, I probably would have ignored it, and quickened my pace with getting on

Toothless " I hated loud noises, and listening to hulking Viking men shout at each other and give me a death glare like they planned to tear me limb from limb was not my idea of a good time " except I thought I recognized the voices. I paused, looking around the corner of the forge.

There they were, the five teens who had become my friends over the course of the full year that I had been on Berk. Astrid and Snotlout were clearly having an intense argument, Fishlegs was whimpering and trying to stuff himself out of sight, and the twins, Ruffnut and Tuffnut, were watching with vague interest.

"No more, you hear me, Snotlout?! NO MORE!" For good measure, Astrid reared back her fist and punched my cousin as hard as she could in the gut before striding away, her nose in the air. Fishlegs followed her, and the twins peeled away, looking for a new form of destruction, I supposed.

Snotlout looked deflated.

"What's wrong?" I asked as I approached.

He glanced up in surprise and grinned. "Hi, Hiccup! And, well, that's just Astrid, being"you know"her." He folded his arms with a loud groan.

"What were you two even fighting about, anyway?"

Snotlout sat down, leaning his back against the side of the forge and I took a seat on the ground across from him.

"Halloween," he replied. "She won't do it with me, and she won't allow any of the others to, either."

"What, celebrate it?" I asked, surprised. "Astrid doesn't seem like the type to hate on a holiday."

"She's not," he sighed. "But every year, I convince them to do something with me " something, you know, \_scary\_ " and Fishlegs always gets scared. Astrid's tired of it, I guess, because she told me no more this year."

"But the things you do surely can't be that bad."

"Well, last year wasn't. We just sat up and told ghost stories, but the year before that, we all went on a ghost hunt. And the year before that, I stole the candy bowl off your dad's porch."

"Wow," I said, impressed. I would never have dared steal so much as a teabag from my dad, let alone a whole bowl of candy.

Snotlout grinned. "Yeah, see, you appreciate it." He sighed. "Unfortunately, nobody else does. Astrid's sick of Fishlegs getting scared, and she's sick of getting blamed for what happens."

"Well" I began slowly. "You know, if you want, I'll do something with you this year."

He brightened. "Really?"

"Sure," I responded, glad that he looked his usual cheerful self again. "Did you have anything in mind for this year?"

"Oh, you bet I did!" Snotlout jumped eagerly to his feet and pointed to the old, crumbling house perched on the extreme edge of the cliff face, balanced precariously over the sea. I had walked by that house a million times, but I had never given it too much thought before now. "I was going to convince them to stay in there with me for a whole night."

"What's so scary about an old house?" I demanded, confused.

Snotlout's smile widened. "That's not just any old house, Hiccup â€" that's the most haunted place on the whole island. Nobody has ever dared go in there before. After its last owner died mysteriously, his nephew and niece wouldn't even take the money he left them; they insisted it was cursed, and threw every single coin into the sea."

"Wow," I said again. I couldn't imagine throwing away any money at all, mostly because I needed all I could get.

Snotlout grinned. "I know, right? We could go in there and explore. I bet there's loads of stuff in that creepy old house. Not to mention we could pull an all-nighter with ghost stories."

"I don't know about that part," I admitted. "The all-nighter, I mean. I got the day off today, but the forge will probably be open again tomorrow andâ€"

"No," Snotlout interrupted, shaking his head. "Gobber always gets really drunk on Halloween night, and he has such a bad hangover the next day that he rarely ever comes in to work. You're free of Gobber, at least."

"Vadrika," I corrected automatically.

My cousin looked confused. "What?"

"Ohâ€"never mind. Just tell me when you want me to come."

\* \* \*

><p>Snotlout and I decided to meet up at ten o' clock at night and, as Snotlout uneasily reminded me of how he'd stolen Stoick's candy bowl two years ago, and how that was still a sore spot between them, I decided not to mention it to my dad where I was going. In fact, I waited until he had gone to bed, because he almost always came in my room before going to his to check on me or some nonsense, and then me and Toothless flew out the window and down to the old house.<p>

Toothless had not exactly been ecstatic about my decision to spend the night in the house with Snotlout, so he settled himself down for a dragon nap immediately after we entered the house. Entering was the hard part, though â€" Snotlout didn't seem to want to touch anything, and the lock crumbled to dust under my touch when I pushed the door open.

"Seeâ€|" Snotlout whispered. "It's hauntedâ€|"

"No, it's not," I replied stubbornly, taking one of the candles my cousin had brought and lighting it to penetrate the darkness. The tiny flame flickered and glowed, casting deep shadows on the walls as I walked inside. The floor was made up of rotting wood, and we had to be careful where we stepped, for fear a floorboard would crash beneath us. And though it was a full moon out, Snotlout told me not to touch the thick, dusty curtains for fear that ghosts might pop out.

Secretly thinking it was ridiculous, but willing to listen to him all the same, I set my candle down on the sturdiest bit of floor I could find, and sat down myself.

"What are you doing?" Snotlout looked at me in surprise. "We are still going to take a look around the place, aren't we?"

"Oh. If you want to, then, I guess." I picked the candle back up and rose to my feet, following him closely up the stairs. The house wasn't really frightening to me; it was sad and empty and cold-looking.

Snotlout found proof of ghosts everywhere, and I was glad when we finally went back down to the first floor and set up camp down there again.

"So what do we do now?" I asked, unfolding one of the blankets Snotlout had brought "in case you get tired, because you're the wimp". (His words, not mine.)

"We tell ghost stories, of course!" He said excitedly, picking up one of the candles and holding it just under his chin to create a spooky-looking lighting on his face. "Do you want to go first, or do you want me to?"

"Oh, I don't care." I shrugged. "I don't have a lot of scary stories to tell, to be honest, so you go first."

"Alright." He looked pleased. "Let's thinkâ€|ooh! I know! I'll tell you the story of the Ghost of the Broken Heart!"

I settled down to listen to the story and he began.

"Once, a very long time ago, a woman had a baby, whom she loved dearly. But, unfortunately, he was a runtâ€|"oh, no offense meant, Hiccup," he added hastily. "But, he was a runt, and the woman's husband, a stern man, decided that the baby should not be allowed to live to bring shame upon the tribe."

I started indignantly.

"So," Snotlout continued, ignoring me, "the man decided that he would leave his baby on the mountainside, but he knew that his wife would not like this decision. So the man also decided that the wife could not be told the plan, and he stole the baby himself, while his wife was asleep. In the dead of night, he left his baby on the mountainside, and rode on home, unconcerned with his fate. When the mother discovered what had occurred, she was so angry with her

husband that she cursed him for all eternity. He would never, she announced, never be truly happy. And he would never be able to make up for the crime he had committed, the crime of killing a child. When the curse was spoken and performed, she left her husband to search for her baby. Her little boat traveled so far, for so long, that when she died, her ghost was bound to the last place she had searched: the Beach of the Broken Heart, named after her, for how much she missed her baby. And, whenever she sees a little boy, out by himself, she will start screaming." Snotlout leaned forward suddenly, dropping the candle down beside him. "'ARE YOU MY LOST CHILD?' she will shriek, and when she finds that you are not, she will reach into your chest herself, and withdraw your beating heart, for if her child cannot live, neither can anyone else's."

The candle guttered, and outside, the wind howled angrily.

"â€|Interesting story," I managed.

Snotlout grinned. "Do you like it?"

"Uhâ€|yeah. I guess. A little unbelievable, butâ€"

"Why's it unbelievable?"

"Well, because ghosts aren't real."

"Yes, they are!" Snotlout looked nothing short of furious now. "Ghosts are real!"

I folded my arms. "Oh, c'mon! You cannot scare me with one little story about some made-up beachâ€"

"Made-up? Made-up? That story was set a hundred years ago, and it actually happened! And there is a beach called the Beach of the Broken Heart!"

"There is?"

"Yes! It's Uglithug property, though, so nobody ever goes on it, but it makes for a really good story."

"Huh." I considered that. "But, ghosts definitely aren'tâ€"

"Are you kidding? This place is filled with ghosts! This whole house! It's so haunted that no other Viking has ever dared go in here since its last owner died. And! That story I just told you is real! And I can prove it, because it happened to Mogadon the Meathead!"

"Who?"

"Mogadon the Meathead â€" we're allies with his tribe, and a man from his tribe used to have a son, only they wandered too close to the Beach of the Broken Heart, and the ghost appeared, demanding to know if the boy was her son. His father tried to tug his boy away and run, but the ghost had already snapped out his heart. And we saw his body before the funeral, there was a clean hole right where his heart should have been."

I shuddered. "Snotlout, stop making things up to get me. I don't scare easily." I folded my arms and lifted my chin resolutely.

There was a huge bang upon the door.

I'm sorry to say that I screamed out loud and jumped to my feet, looking around for a ghost lady.

Snotlout screamed, too, and stood up, looking ready to bolt.

"It's n-not a ghost," I insisted. "Ghosts aren't solid, they c-can't knock on doorsâ€¦wait, what am I thinking of? Ghosts aren't realâ€¦"

"It's the ghost ladyâ€¦" Snotlout whimpered. "She's come for our heartsâ€¦"

"No, she hasn't," I responded sharply. "There's a logical explanation for this."

Another bang.

"Hiccup? Hiccup? Are you in there?"

I gave a terrified squeak. I turned on Snotlout. \_"How does it know my name?! If this is a prank, I swear to Asgard and backâ€¦"\_

But Snotlout wasn't listening. He had taken off already, up the stairs.

"Don't you dare leave me down here, asshat!" I snapped, rushing after him, though I'm pretty sure I sounded a lot higher due to fear. "Wait for me, wait for me!"

The door flew open, and a slim figure stood in the doorway, backed by a larger one.

"Oh, my god," Snotlout said shakily, freezing right there on the landing. "T-two? Come on, run, Hiccup, maybe we can lock ourselves in a room before they notice us."

The ghosts entered the room, carrying candles. Exceptâ€¦the ghosts looked kind of familiarâ€¦and they both looked very annoyed.

"What," Stoick the Vast demanded, stopping at the bottom of the stairs, "what are you two boys screaming about?"

"Hiccup, umâ€¦thought you were a ghost lady," Snotlout muttered, his cheeks bright red.

I turned on him. "I thought he was? I thought he was? Don't you dare turn this around on me, you were the one who made a break for it!"

"Well, you were squeaking like a mouse!"

Astrid crossed her arms.

When I caught sight of her, I tried to straighten up. "Umâ€¦hello, thereâ€¦Astrid. Umâ€¦what are you two doing here, then, if you're not

here to scare the daylights out of us?"

"We did scare the daylights out of you," she replied, with an eye roll, but she was smiling affectionately all the same. "Stoick's candy bowl went missing again, and then you disappeared. He got worried, and of course blamed Snotlout for the disappearance of both â€" not unreasonably," she added. "Anyway, I told him about your plans to stay in this house, and he came up here looking."

"I didn't touch his candy bowl!" Snotlout said furiously.

"Regardless," Stoick spoke up, "Hiccup, you're not staying here. I can't tell you what to do, Snotlout, but I would appreciate the return of the bowl."

"Why can't I stay?" I demanded indignantly.

"Number one, this house is dangerous â€" the stairs and floor are falling apart â€" and number two, you were screaming your head off three seconds ago, convinced that I was a ghost lady." He tried to look stern, but it just came across as a little amused. "C'mon, then, let's go back home."

"It was Snotlout who thought you were a ghost lady," I mumbled.

"Remind me never to depend on either of you to help me deal with the supernatural," Astrid cut in, shaking her head.

## 108. Winter's Warmth

Untold

### Chapter 108 - Winter's Warmth

Summary: Physical discomfort doesn't matter so much, so long as there's warmth on the inside.

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, so I wrote this because winter is my very favorite season because there's Christmas and there's Thanksgiving, and there's snow and it's been like three days of thirty degree weather, seriously. And I was working on Nano Wrimo, but then I felt that I needed to write something for winter, so yeah. A huge thank-you to Jack Frost, basically. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>Winters on Berk were cold, harsh seasons, where most of the rivers and lakes and streams froze over, and where everything turned a glittering white from snow or frost or ice, and where, in the daytime, the sun shone rather weakly and did not bring much warmth, and where the temperature plummeted every night and blizzards sprang up at a moment's notice.<p>

I was used to the winters on Outcast Island, which were considerably milder, only ten degrees or so, at their coldest. My first winter on Berk was a bit of a surprise to me, all that snow and ice, so much winter that it seemed the island just didn't know what to do with it



all. But when winter passed and the spring and summer seasons took over, I forgot just exactly how cold it was, and exactly how much snow five feet of snow equaled up to, and I forgot just how much I shivered, or how much my teeth chattered in the dead of winter.

This was a night in winter, in the very thick of their season, and the single red quilt that was always on my bed was not offering me much warmth. I could have crawled off the bed and curled up with Toothless, of course, but that might have woken him, and I didn't want to do that. I pulled the blankets closer around myself and considered getting out of bed and dressing in layers, but just as this thought occurred to me, the door opened and Stoick quietly crept in, bars of moonlight from the window illuminating his silhouette.

I rose up on my elbow and smiled at him, letting him know I was awake and he didn't have to be quiet on my account. Which, Stoick the Vast never did anything quietly anyway, but he at least tried whenever he thought I was asleep.

He smiled at me and came over to the side of the bed, ruffling my hair a little. It had been almost a year since we'd discovered that I was his blood son, but his habit of checking on me every night still hadn't stopped.

"Are you alright?" He tucked the blanket around my shoulders worriedly. "You look cold."

"I'm okay," I shrugged. "I'm a little cold, but I can live with that."

"Hang on." Stoick disappeared from the room, leaving the door open.

Toothless blinked sleepily once or twice and gazed around the room, looking for what had woken him.

"Go back to sleep, bud, it was just Dad."

Toothless nodded, but at that moment Stoick came bustling back into the room with an armload of blankets, and proceeded to stack them on me, one by one. Toothless' ears perked up when he understood and he buried his face in the blankets on top of me and breathed slowly in and out, heating them instantly.

I smiled at the pair of them, sinking down into the warmth. "Thanks, guys."

"Sleep well, son." Stoick kissed me on the head before disappearing from the room and Toothless gave me one last breath of heat before settling down on the floor again.

It was the dead of winter outside, howling wind and snow and frost crackling on my window, and I was still shivering slightly, as the heat hadn't entirely hit me yet, but I didn't mind. Thanks to Stoick and Toothless, on the inside, I was already warm enough to get me through a blizzard.

Untold

## Chapter 109 - Crying for Help

Summary: "Help," I'm whispering, barely loud enough to be heard.  
"Helpâ€¦pleaseâ€¦someoneâ€¦help meâ€¦"

\*\*A/N: WARNING: Much violence lies ahead. Many tears are shed in this chapter. I confess, I'm also hoping to tug a few out with the readers xD anyway, since last chapter was so full of cheese and fluff and warmth in the dead of winter, I decided Hiccup needed an abrupt return to earth in the form of torture xD this was done off several prompts, but I focused mainly on 'cry for help'. I hope everyone likes. Plus also, I'm kind of hungry. And I should be working on Nano. But yeah. Have this angst. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Blood. So much blood. Pouring, bright red and frightening and warm down my back, pain exploding from each crash of the whip, each strike of the sword, oh, God, oh, God, oh, God, it hurts so bad, please make it stop, please let me die, I hate thisâ€¦<p>

What more do they want from me? They have whipped me and beaten me and denied me food all day today, and they've cut me open with a sword. Why can't he just leave me alone? I've given him blood, and I've given him tears. I've given him and all his Outcast scum a nice little show, so why can't they just leave me alone? I'm literally choking over my own blood and my own tears and my own vomit, and I'm sobbing freely now, because oh, thank God, they're giving me a few minutes alone in my cell to recover. Maybe they'll even let me sleep tonight and maybe they won't keep me awake with another whipping.

Of course, my hopes are not high.

I'm shaking on the cold, dirty floor of my cell, shaking and trembling so badly that my chains are clinking loudly. "Help," I'm whispering, barely loud enough to be heard.  
"Helpâ€¦pleaseâ€¦someoneâ€¦help meâ€¦"

My voice echoes strangely around all the little dark corners of the cell, coming back to me and rattling around inside my head. The only friendly voice I hear these days is my own.

My shirt is missing â€" they took it from me during the last whipping, and they have not given it back. Pain is exploding on every nerve ending in my body. I just want to die. If it weren't for Toothless, I would be dead by now. I would have found a way, and I would have hung myself, or something like that. But Toothless still needs me. He can't fly on his own away from here, and leaving him here is not an act of friendship. Leaving him here is condemning him forevermore to this hell, and I shudder at the thought.

What if we never escape? What if I'm forced to stay, forever in this hell, alone, only the echoes of my cries for help coming back to me? I squeeze my eyes shut. A few more tears make their slow, warm way down my face, and I bite the inside of my lip as my back throbs again. Maybe I'll never get away from him. He always finds me in the end. I want to give up. I want to die. I'm tired of living this

way.

But Toothlessâ€|Toothlessâ€|

I close my eyes and lay back on the floor, shivering from the cold of the cell floor and shuddering with fear. I'm so afraid, and even with the knowledge that Toothless is out there, I also feel so alone. I'm alone with nothing but my echo and my pain and my fear.

## 110. Be Careful What You Wish For Part 6

Untold

### Chapter 110 - Be Careful What You Wish For Part 6

Summary: Continuation of the 'Wish' arc.

**\*\*A/N:** This is dedicated to TheOneWithTheScar. Today is her birthday and I hope she has a very happy one, not just because she's a terrific writer and friend, but also because she is a wonderful person. I don't know if she considers me a friend, but I'm fortunate enough to have at least become acquainted with her over the past year, and I just hope that her birthday is as fabulous as she is. Have a wonderful birthday. You deserve it :) To the rest of you, I hope you enjoy this chapter. And please ignore the fact that I posted this for her birthday because I didn't know what her favorite story of mine was. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>Gobber departed from the house then, leaving me alone with the kid, absolutely clueless about what to do. For a bit of time, I just stood around, watching Hiccup and Toothless, wondering what to do, but he took the problem off my hands. Glancing up at me and blinking those innocent eyes, he asked, "Where's my daddy?"<p>

"What?" I demanded; for a moment, I wasn't quite sure what he meant.

"My daddy," Hiccup repeated. "Alvin the Treacherous, remember?"

"Oh, umâ€|" Struggling to find an excuse as to why he was on Berk, and why Alvin was not here with us, I knelt down to his level with a sigh. "See, the thing is, Hiccupâ€"

"You don't have to lie to me," he interrupted suddenly, as if he had guessed my inner debate.

I pulled back in surprise, regarding him curiously.

"If Daddy kicked me out, that's okay," he shrugged. "He does it a lot, actually."

Anger pricked at me. "What?" I spat.

"Well, he tells me I should be more of a man," Hiccup replied matter-of-factly, scratching Toothless under the chin as he spoke. He seemed supremely unconcerned with the fact that his father did not seem to want him. "So whenever he thinks I'm not living up to his

standards, he kicks me out for a few hours, or days. Normally I just go into the forest and wait him out there, so I can avoid Halfdan calling me stupid and useless."

Something within me seared kind of painfully, rage filling my chest. "What?"

Hiccup sighed, taking his hands off Toothless' chin and running his fingers through his hair. "It's okay, though, it really is, Mr. Stoick. Daddy always comes back for me. He won't leave me here longer than a week, I know it."

The anger faded temporarily, to be replaced by guilt. Hiccup believed so firmly that Alvin would be back for him soon, and he'd have to stay here for a month. He appeared fine with the fact that Alvin regularly kicked him out of the house, but what would he do when the man didn't come back for him? He would be a wreck.

He glanced up at me, obviously incorrectly reading my expression and looking a little guilty. "I'm sorry. I'm talking too much again, aren't I?"

"Wh-what?"

"Daddy always says that I talk too much and I should learn to shut my goddamn trap," he put on a scarily accurate Alvin impression towards the last end of the sentence, and then fell silent for a second before continuing. "And Halfdan says I'm not just a useless screw-up, I'm a useless talkative screw-up, and that makes me even worse. So I try not to talk too much, but there's just so much to talk about, I can't help it! Like everybody else in my village just grunts a few words to each other about the latest dragon attack, but why can't anybody just have a decent conversation?"

All of his words kind of began to run together towards the end there, and I blinked for a second, unsure how to process this. "It's, umâ€¦it's fine, Hiccup. You're not talking too much." Blatant lie. His incessant chatter made it hard to focus, but it was too hard to tell him that; he just sounded so pitiful whenever he spoke about his life on Outcast Island that I couldn't bring myself to treat him the way everyone else did.

Hiccup smiled happily at me, reaching over to scratch under Toothless' chin again, giggling when the dragon began cooing and purring. He hugged the Night Fury tightly around the neck at one point as I watched them, running through Hiccup's words in my head. \_"My daddy always comes back for me." \_

If Alvin didn't come to pick his "son" up soon, Hiccup would be crushed. But the problem was, I couldn't just wish him back to normal until the full moon, and as far as I knew, I was the only person stupid enough to have ever wished their sixteen-year-old son back into a five-year-old. Unlessâ€¦|

My mind began whirling with the possibilities. Some people said that Gothi wasn't just good with medicines and herbal remedies â€" she was good with magic and restoration, too. If I asked her to restore Hiccup's ageâ€¦|

I looked down at the boy on the floor, laughing again as Toothless

nuzzled his stomach. I knelt down next to him, capturing the boy and the dragon's attention. "C'mon, Hiccup," I took his tiny hand in mine, pulling him to his feet. "I want you to meet someone."

\* \* \*

><p>I had to stop and pick up Gobber along the way, because the blacksmith was the only one I knew who could actually read the symbols Gothi sketched in the sand with her staff and besides those symbols, she never really spoke. So we all journeyed up to the house, located on the highest peak of the island, to find her relaxing on her front porch that overlooked the sea. Hiccup took one look at the old lady and hid behind me, obviously scared to meet her.<p>

She turned her aged gray eyes to look at us, picking up her staff and rising to her feet.

"Hello, Gothi," Gobber said cheerfully, for all the world as if paying your village healer a visit because you accidentally reversed your son's aging was perfectly normal, "nice day, isn't it?"

Gothi grunted noncommittally.

"Well, y'see, the thing isâ€¦" Gobber's voice took on a suddenly businesslike tone, "we need your helpâ€¦" he gently drew Hiccup out from behind me, and the boy shyly peeked out at the healer, "with him."

Gothi looked at him for a long time. And then she stared at me.

"Yes," Gobber awkwardly filled the silence with more chatter, "umâ€¦Stoick here, made a wish on the full moon, and nowâ€¦he's, umâ€¦regretting it."

Gothi kept staring at me.

"So we were wondering if you could fix it."

Hiccup was looking between the three of us, and just looked confused.

Gothi sighed, her staff rattling as she drew odd lines in the dirt, motioning for Gobber to come and read them. This he did, but his brown eyes grew wider and wider with every sentence.

"What is it?" I demanded anxiously, stepping forward, around Hiccup.

"Uhâ€¦wellâ€¦Stoickâ€¦she can'tâ€¦exactlyâ€¦do anything about the wish," Gobber admitted slowly, reluctantly. "She, uhâ€¦actually says for us to solve our own problem, in fact, and that the solution will come to us in time?"

"But we've already got the other solution," I told the old woman. "Wait until the full moon and then change him back, then."

"Change who back?" Hiccup interrupted.

Gothi shook her head at us sternly.

"So, that's not the real solution?" I asked uncertainly.

She shook her head.

"Then what is?"

She drew something else in the dirt with her staff.

"She says" Gobber started reading her symbols, trailing off as he did so. "She says the full moon will change him back, but a different problem will arise, and the full moon might not be the best choice."

"Then what will be?" I looked down at Hiccup, who had picked up a stick from Gothi's porch and started doodling in the sand himself. Hiccup, all big green eyes and overlarge fur vest and freckled countenance, innocence. Everything about him was innocence.

And everything about the teenager he would grow into was corrupted, tainted by something darker that no one could control. I knelt down next to him for a second, watching him draw happily in the sand, and I think I might have started to understand Gothi's real solution.

## 111. A Father's Job

Untold

### Chapter 111 - A Father's Job

Summary: It's a father's job to worry. Thunderstorm arc from Stoick's POV.

\*\*A/N: I was bored. And my friend RazzlePazzleDooDot wanted to see this. So this is for her. I'm really tired. I've mostly spent the day listening to Evanescence's Snow White Queen. I love that song, you know that? Like seriously, for any of you who haven't heard that song before, it is a wonderful song, it's so full of insight and everybody says it's "disturbing" but it's just amazing seriously and also the lead singer of Evanescence has a really high-pitched voice and she sang her lowest note in that song. Seriously that song is incredible. It is perfection. And I want to write a one-sided Dagcup fic off that song. I don't know, man. I have the head canon that Dagur is a sick freak who wants Hiccup, in the sick way. Like not in the I want you but in the I want you and I don't give a shit if you want me I'll have you anyway. Anyway. It's December, and I feel too hot, but at the same time, I'm a little cold. I just hit my elbow on the edge of the table. My shoulders have been sore all day. I'm pretty much just filling this AN with random facts about my day. OH! I made a dessert today. I'm not that much of a cook, but I made a dessert. It's in the freezer now. I'm going to eat it. I licked the spoons and forks and mixers that were used. I'm trying to think of something else I did today, besides make a dessert and listen to Evanescence. I actually don't think I did anything except write. I think I need to work on Unbreakable, because nobody seems very happy with me on that story D:\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Even if Gobber would tell you otherwise, I was generally a patient, sociable person when it came to my village. However, when the knock sounded at my door, and I heard many people whispering to each other from behind it, I raised my eyes to the heavens and silently prayed for patience. Ever since these thunderstorms had started, the villagers had been visiting me in packs, like angry wolves that needed to be soothed.<p>

When I opened the door and saw Mildew on the other side, I almost wished I had just left it closed. The last thing I wanted was for Hiccup to hear more accusations â€" he'd seemed upset enough when I'd left him upstairs.

The old man thumped his staff upon the ground, talking loudly, as if he thought I couldn't hear him over the storm. "We know you're hiding him, Stoick, and we won't stand for this any longer! Bring him out!"

"I'm not hiding anyone," I spat the words out, but kept my voice clear and my head high; if I spoke with enough authority, Mildew might just drop the whole thing.

"That boy's the one causing these storms!" he snarled. "And if you try and deny it, you're kidding yourself. Where is he?"

I clenched my hands into fists. "He's gone," I lied, trying to inject as much anger in my voice as I could muster â€" it wasn't hard. "I've already sent him off the island."

Mildew raised an eyebrow. "Prove it. Let's see." He pushed the door open wider with his staff, taking a step inside. I blocked him easily.

"Trying to force entry into the chief's home is a sign of disrespect, and I've banished people for less. Get out of my home. Now."

For a second, we both just stared at each other, sizing each other up. Mildew narrowed his eyes, breaking my gaze, and turned to the villagers behind him. "Search the island for the boy and his Night Fury!" he yelled at them, sliding back out onto the porch. I slammed the door shut behind him, bolting it securely this time, and ran up the stairs again. Storms or no storms, Hiccup wasn't safe anymore. Mildew could turn very nasty if he didn't get what he wanted.

But when I opened the door, the sight that met my eyes was unwelcome: the room was empty, the blankets hastily thrown back onto the bed. The thin red curtains that barely covered the window had been pushed back, so I could see the true damage that the storm outside had caused. Houses were on fire, people were screaming and trying to save themselves and their families. And all through the wreckage, Mildew marched, leading his small band of followers, yelling at them to search everywhere for Hiccup. I knew I needed to get out there and calm the people down, but for a moment, I fell upon the bed, my hands clenching into fists around the blanket. It was still warm from Hiccup's body, which meant that he couldn't have left too long ago. But what had happened to him?

A night flight was out of the question; after how scared he was of storms, I was willing to bet that not a lot would get him out in

weather like this. Had one of Mildew's lot found him up here, andâ€|no, Hiccup lived on the second floor of the house, and not a lot of adults had dragons to lift them up.

That left the only other possibility, one that made me so furious with Mildew that I wanted to banish him on the spot. Had Hiccup left of his own free will? Had he abandoned the island out of guilt, or left due to fear?

Wherever he was, he wasn't here, and Toothless was gone, too. I needed to find them, both of them. I needed to bring Hiccup home. I raced for the door and down the stairs again, grabbing my sword from off the table and shoving it back into its scabbard, ripping a battleaxe off the wall in preparation for what lay ahead. I didn't know where Hiccup was now, but I knew that I was going to have to fight tooth and nail to get him back.

I opened the front door and ran down the front steps, looking around, not at the wreckage of my village, but to the skies, where I knew they'd be. I couldn't see anything, the night was too dark, and Toothless blended in so well with the stars, but I knew they were up there, in that sixth sense way that I had.

Where would he be heading, though? What was the quickest way off the island? The open sea was the right answer, but I couldn't help but feel that this would not be Hiccup's chosen form of departure. Storms scared him, and water attracted lightning. He would stay as far from the ocean as he could until his path merged with it. That left the forest as the only other answer, and I was already unsheathing my sword, prepared for the struggle to come, when I heard noises from the dark trees, screaming and shouting, even a few swearwords.

"Chief! Chief!" Hoark was yelling, too, but he was yelling for me, grabbing at my sleeve and trying to get me to help with the village. I could see silhouettes, outlined sharply and clearly by the blazing orange of the burning houses, everyone pouring bucket after bucket of water on whatever home they could reach. I turned away from the forest for an instant, watching as Astrid Hofferson guided her Nadder over the roof of the Ingerman home, pouring a full bucket of water over it.

I couldn't have been gone longer than ten or fifteen minutes, and when I remembered Hiccup's dilemma, I looked to the forest again. Torches were being lit, a pathway leading directly from the trees to the docks. Some of Mildew's band must have searched the forest already, but by the sound of their screaming, they had found something. My heart clenched in sudden fear, and though I knew it couldn't have been avoided, I suddenly regretted turning my back to take care of the village. I ran instead for the docks, my mind racing with horrible scenarios, my eyes scanning the dark night.

The churning waters of the ocean were violently crashing against the rocks and shore, reminding me of the storm brewing overhead. I ran past landing stage after landing stage, eyes on the lowest, the one closest to the water, at the very end of the shore. No boats were docked there â€" those docks were too small for even our canoes, but I could see dark shapes, human figures moving about on the wooden planks.



I joined them, looking around for the figures holding the torches, hoping that the firelight would illuminate the scene. When I spotted one of the men holding a torch, I quickly made my way over to him, taking it from him and ignoring his protests as I pushed my way to the front. Mildew was standing over Hiccup, holding an iron block on a chain, forcing it over the boy's head.

Rage flared within me, and I stepped forward to speak up. But before I could, Mildew kicked Hiccup in the side, rolling him over onto his back. "Say your prayers."

"I can't," Hiccup's voice was so weak and he sounded so shaky, like he was trying to be brave when he was terrified, and it broke my heart. "The gods don't like me very much, especially not now." He gestured to the sky, flinching when lightning struck where he'd pointed.

I could keep quiet no longer. I handed the torch off to the nearest woman, charging forward. My rage mounted when I saw Mildew putting a boot on Hiccup's stomach, preventing him from getting up.

"Whatâ€¦" I started, but I was so angry I could barely speak, so I had to start over, "what the hell do you think you're doing with my son?"

Mildew's eyes were so wide that it was almost comical, except I was too angry to be amused. I narrowed my eyes, waiting for him to speak, to stutter out an excuse.

"Your son is not fit to be on Berk," he sneered at me, putting a cold emphasis on the second word, making me remember all his cruel nicknames for Hiccup, 'demon' being the kindest of them.

"I'll decide that, Mildew!" For the first time in a long time since dealing with the old man, I wasn't struggling to keep my temper in check â€" as far as I was concerned, Mildew deserved a death sentence, at the very least. I knelt down next to Hiccup and grabbed him up by the collar of his riding vest, setting him back down on the docks behind me. I wanted to be gentler, to ask him if he was okay, but I couldn't take the time right now. If I hesitated for even a second, Mildew would jump in with his own words and convince the crowd around him to follow his side.

"You're showing blatant and rather disgraceful favoritism, Stoick. Perhaps your boy has turned you soft?" He raised his voice steadily as he spoke, as if wanting to attract a crowd. It worked.

Finding myself wrong-footed and unsure how to proceed, I struggled with my words for a moment or two. "I don'tâ€¦I didn'tâ€¦you have no right to go around banishing people willy-nilly! That is my job! I'm the chief!"

"Well, you're not doing your job very well, then! Just hand over the position, Stoick, and maybe your brother can give Hiccup what he deservesâ€¦"

The sight of my brother in the crowd, and the mention of him on Mildew's lips, caused my temper to rise again. "Whatever you say about my son, he is not the cause of these storms!"

"Everything about him is suspicious!" Mildew sneered at me. "He comes from Outcast Island, he can't be trusted, he rides a Night Fury, the offspring of lightning and death!"

"You're just accusing Hiccup because you're a sour old man who doesn't know when to cut his losses!"

"But you are!"

"Stoick!"

"I will not!"

"Stoick!"

"What?!" I'm sorry to say that I yelled at Hiccup, probably unfairly, turning so suddenly that our faces were inches apart.

Hiccup didn't flinch, though, didn't even look afraid; in fact, his eyes were gleaming with excitement as he spoke. "I think I know what's causing these storms!"

Mildew opened his mouth to interrupt, but Hiccup forestalled him. "No, wait, listen! It's the metal! The lightning is hitting the metal!"

Nobody spoke. Nobody denied or upheld these claims; for a moment, everyone was entirely silent.

"Oh, bah! Have you ever heard of anything so insane?" Mildew sneered.

"I can prove it!" Hiccup turned away from us, already starting to take off in the general direction of the village, but Mildew stopped him.

"The storm was going on even before that statue!"

"But there was another type of metal on Berk, something else that was attracting the lightning!"

"What?" Mildew's eyes flicked restlessly around the scene, looking for an escape route. "No, there wasn't!"

"Yes, there was!" Hiccup sounded actually excited now, almost giddy that at last, he was being listened to. "Follow me! Let me show you!"

And then, without hesitation or warning, Mildew snapped. He swooped down and grabbed Hiccup around the shoulders, shaking him, hard, one hand going automatically to the boy's throat, almost like he couldn't help himself.

I saw the scene through a curtain of red, my vision blurring due to rage. Mildew was screaming something, but my own ears were ringing so loudly, my own wordless yells mixing with his so that I couldn't hear anything. And Hiccup looked scared.

The look lasted for only an instant, but it was there, real and solid and undeniable. Mildew had scared him, had grabbed him violently and

manhandled him, and he was about to pay for that. I wasn't aware of drawing my sword, but suddenly, I had it in my hands as I yelled at Mildew, giving him one last chance to turn back.

He stood quite still, frozen almost, like he wasn't sure what to do. And then he threw Hiccup back down onto the docks, and I heard my little boy's cry of pain, igniting my rage even more. "I say the boy's just trying to save his own skin!" Mildew looked around at the crowd at large, obviously expecting them to agree with him. "Look at him, the pathetic, wretched, crawling littleâ€"

"Mildew!" I had restrained my anger once, and if the old man thought I'd be willing to do it a second time, he was sorely mistaken.

He immediately fell silent, staring rather nervously at me.

"I can prove it," Hiccup's voice was quiet, choked from Mildew's hands around his throat. His voice was actually so weak that I was surprised anyone could hear it at all.

One of the women in the crowd made an impatient noise. "I say throw them both out to sea! Death on the spot, for him and the dragon! For all we know, they're both the cause of this!"

"No!" Hiccup was up instantly, speaking so quickly that the words ran together. "No, wait, please! Please I'll show you what I'm talking about and then you guys can throw me out to sea or whatever, but please don't hurt Toothless!"

I stepped forward suddenly, determined to back him as the crowd began to murmur. He tilted his head back, looking nervously at me, and I leaned down and spoke. "Hiccup calm down." I raised my voice to address the crowd. "I shall of course be investigating my son's claims, and I expect you all to hold your tongues until I have proven, or disproven, them." I looked directly at Mildew as I spoke, but the old man seemed unconcerned with the thoughts whirling in my head.

Some in the crowd agreed, some looked unhappy, but nobody dared argue; they all just stared expectantly at us, so I looked down at Hiccup. "Lead the way."

"Ohâ€|rightâ€|" He started forward, taking off the iron block that had been weighing him down all this time, and held it with more ease than I would have imagined. He scrambled as fast as he could up the hill, and when he landed in our front yard, for a second, I felt like telling him he must have gotten the wrong house. I had never had anything metal in my yard, unless you counted the weapons rack that Val had made us take down because she said it looked "tacky".

Hiccup started digging in the dirt, his hands very white against the damp, dark clods he pulled up out of the ground. At last he stood, a smooth metal plate clutched in one hand, a look of triumph on his face.

Mildew looked furious. "Very clever, boy. But can you prove they're all over the island?"

"Yes!" Hiccup dropped the plate and walked about ten feet away, where he started digging up another one. "See? There are more!"

"Nobody believes you!" Mildew howled, but I tuned him out, watching as Hiccup sought out more metal plates, showing them off to us, letting us inspect them so we could see he was telling the truth.

Hiccup and Mildew's argument, quickly growing more intense, ended finally with Hiccup running off, heading back towards the docks, but instead of the lower docks where we had been standing only just before, he went instead to the higher docks, jumping onto the deck of the nearest ship and starting up the mast.

I raced after him, feeling my heart beginning to pound in fear for him. "Hiccup! Wait, get back down here!"

"It's just the metal!" Hiccup called down to the watching villagers. "See? It's the metal!" he raised the iron block over his head, waving it around like he wanted to be struck. My heart jumped into my throat as a fork of white lightning appeared in the sky, connecting solidly with the iron block, flashes of pure electric current running through Hiccup's body, shaking it. When the current finally died, nobody breathed or moved for a few long seconds.

And then Hiccup's shaking, steaming body went limp, his clothes smoldering, and he fell, his fingers still clenched around the iron block. He fell, all the way down towards the ocean, hitting the water with a splash. Everybody stood still, unsure what to do, how to move long enough to get him out of the water. Toothless was the first to act, roaring like crazy and attempting to get out of his chains. Gobber instantly dashed over to the dragon and started undoing the chains, stopping me when I prepared to jump off the dock.

"Let Toothless do it! It'll be too dark down there for you," he told me, at last ripping the muzzle off of him and allowing the dragon to incinerate the rest of his chains, plunging into the ocean. I wanted to go after him, but Gobber seemed to guess what I was thinking, because he rested a hand on the back of my cloak, as if readying himself to grab me if I tried to take the plunge.

It seemed like an eternity before Toothless resurfaced, holding the limp boy in his claws. When he set Hiccup on the docks, Gobber and I both instantly rushed over, and I fell to my knees as I examined him, putting an ear to his chest and praying for his life.

It took such a long time that I held my breath, counting the seconds. But at last, there came that single, glorious thump that meant my son was still alive.

I grabbed him up in my arms, trying to hold him carefully, reminding myself that he had just been struck by lightning and probably couldn't afford to be manhandled right now.

I brought him slowly back to our house, and Gothi the healer came to us to check up on him, and give me tips on what to do when he woke up. I brushed his hair back from his forehead, noting worriedly that his skin was hot and parts of his face were bright red and a little shiny, like they'd been burned.

The farther down you went, the redder his skin got until it became a gruesome-looking brown, right around his stump, but Gothi assured me

that that was just where the lightning had hit, and that he might even develop a scar later on. I guess that it took my boy getting struck by lightning to convince them, but everyone in the village, save Mildew, now believed that Thor was just angry at the metal, but nobody could quite understand why.

I didn't hear any more complaints from the villagers at least, for which I was grateful, because that was the last thing I wanted to think about while I waited for Hiccup to wake up again. He slept clear through not only that day, but the next four as well, stirring slightly on the fourth day and showing minimal signs of life which, according to Gothi, was a very good sign.

Still, I worried.

I suppose I did it mostly because it's a father's job to worry, however much Hiccup hates that part of me. However annoyed he gets by the worries I express, I can't help but express them â€" it's a father's job to worry, and with Hiccup, it's pretty much a full-time one.

## 112. Witness Part 4

Untold

### Chapter 112 - Witness Part 4

Summary: Continuation to the 'Witness' arc.

**\*\*A/N:** Finally dealing with the meaty conflict of Hiccup's adoptive mother on Outcast Island. Ooh, this was quite the chapter, I felt. It's not like amazing or anything, but I like it, a lot. But for those of you who don't like OCs...yeah. Watch out, as this arc is full of them. I prefer to deal with the canon characters in AU settings, just because they're more fun, but I had to stuff this arc full of OCs, seeing as we know very little about the villagers on Outcast Island. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>When the screaming whirlwind set me down again, I was standing on the docks of Outcast Island beside Hiccup, the thick wooden planks creaking as he moved, signifying how old they were. Unlike in most of the other memories, he didn't look anywhere close to sad; he was actually bouncing up and down, his green eyes filled with delight as he watched the ship draw ever nearer.<p>

For my part, I mostly wished that I could just touch Hiccup, and make my presence known â€" I wanted to protect him from the hurt that ship was surely carrying. His short life had been filled with too much pain already. But when the ship docked, I forgot momentarily about Hiccup as the woman manning it jumped lightly off, landing on the docks without even losing her breath. Her windblown, chestnut curls fell in waves down her face, and her shoulder pads were slightly askew. She adjusted something on her wrist guards and turned so both Hiccup and I could look at her full-on. I caught my breath, not because of her beauty, but because I recognized her. Freydis the Fearsome had been remembered as the fiercest, loveliest Viking woman to ever wield an axe. Her belt and holsters were so full of weapons

that her waist jangled oddly every time she moved.

I had seen portraits of Freydis the Fearsome, and many bards had sung tales of her beauty. Many held her in a very high regard, but I had never shared their admiration " she came from Outcast Island and, in my opinion, that was good enough for me to despise her, at the time.

But seeing her turn swiftly and bestow a patient, loving smile upon my son was almost enough to make me relax my anger for a moment. He flew at her with a shout of joy, hugging her tightly and burying his face in her armor, and I held my breath. Surely she was going to react the same way Alvin had, and smack him away, reject him.

But Freydis surprised me. She picked the small boy up in her arms and allowed him to put his thin arms around her neck, putting her forehead against her shoulder. "I missed you," he murmured, sounding both joyful and yet sad at the same time, as if he knew this couldn't last.

"I missed you, too," she set him slowly down on the docks, ruffling his hair. "Now, how's my little warrior been?"

He smiled adoringly up at her, and she took his hand, swinging him lightly as they walked away from the docks, their talk and laughter fading with their figures in the distance.

\* \* \*

><p>The whirlwind now delivered me into a dark forest, sunlight filtering lightly through the branches, filling the tiny meadow where Hiccup and Freydis stood with light. Hiccup's green eyes were a little too bright, but Freydis seemed only to half-hear the conversation " her sword was drawn, and her eyes were flicking restlessly around, obviously looking for someone or something.<p>

"It's not fair," Hiccup protested in a querulous voice. "Why do you have to go again so soon? You've only been here for three days!"

"I'mâ€|I'm sorry, Hiccup." For a moment, Freydis hesitated, focusing entirely on the young boy in front of her. She sheathed her sword, giving him her full attention, and I recognized something akin to pain in her gaze. She knelt down next to him, placing her hands on his shoulders. "But you know I can't stay long, you knew that the day I arrivedâ€"

"Yeah, but only three days? What's wrong, Mom, why do you have to leave? Please stay. Just once."

"Don't misunderstand my goodbyes, Hiccup," she replied. "I have to go. If it was a matter of importanceâ€"

"Then you'd still leave, wouldn't you?"

Her gaze hardened, and again, I feared for Hiccup, feared that she would strike him and shatter him, but she merely straightened her spine and rose up. "You're the one who's being unfair now. You know I love you. My quest is important, Hiccup. You'll understand it when

you're older."

"No! There's no excuse anymore! You have no idea what it's like here when you're gone!" His voice cracked. "All Dad ever does when you're gone is yell at me! At least when you're here he actually looks at me when I speak sometimes, Iâ€"

"Hiccup, I cannot control your father," the way Freydis said 'your father' conveyed disgust, and I automatically knew: she knew the truth of Hiccup, and his origins. And yet she had kept quiet? Why had she never tried toâ€|maybe contact me, tell me he was alright and on Outcast Island?

I knew that such a task would have been difficult to complete, perhaps impossible with Alvin over her shoulder, not to mention impractical. She had no way of knowing anything about me â€" she might have assumed I'd kill her if she tried to contact me at all. Her silence toward me was justified, but my emotions from seeing what Hiccup had gone through in such a short space of time were currently all over the place, and I was blaming whoever I could.

"But you make him better," Hiccup replied, a pleading note in his voice. "C'mon, Mom, please, just stay for one more day." He grabbed at her hand as she turned to leave, and she gently took her hand away, patting him absentmindedly on the head.

"But I can't stay," she told him curtly, her brown hair falling in front of her face, shielding it from his view. "I'm sorry, Hiccup."

She left him standing there in the clearing, alone.

\* \* \*

><p>I was on the docks of Outcast Island again, the open sea spread out before me, but I wasn't paying attention to the beauty â€" though it was nearly sunset, and the fading light was creating spectacular reflections on the water, I was more concerned with the boy at my side. Hiccup was sitting on the docks this time, his boots dangling just an inch or two above the water. He was staring down into his lap, his shoulders shaking with sobs. Tears fell freely down his face, and his misery was horrible to listen to, like the cries of some wounded animal. His auburn bangs fell into his eyes, so I couldn't actually see the tears, but I knew they had to be there. I knelt down next to him, wishing I could touch him, or hug him, maybe, just comfort him in some small way, even if it scared him and he didn't want to be comforted. Why was he crying? Why was he so upset? I couldn't imagine him reacting this badly his mother â€" or "mother" â€" leaving him again to go on one of her quests. By the sound of it, she went on a lot of them, and he had hidden his disappointment well the other times. No, this had to be something else.<p>

He stayed out there on the docks until well after nightfall, his sobs at last slowing after about an hour, pulling his knees up to his chest and gazing out at the open sea. Footsteps from behind warned me of an approaching intruder, but when I turned my gaze to look, it was a weaponless old man, no armor, and a kind look in his pale eyes. He knelt down next to Hiccup as well, and I felt a flash of something like envy when he took the boy's chin in his hands. He could touch my son so easily, and yet I could not. I couldn't intervene with the

course Hiccup's life had taken â€" I had to sit back and watch it happen.

"C'mon, Hiccup," the old man's voice was gentle as an Outcast's could be. "C'mon, up you get nowâ€|"

"She's gone, isn't she?" Hiccup's throat sounded dry and cracked from so many tears. "She's never coming back." He sounded hollow and numb now, his lips moving slowly.

"It's late," the old man replied evasively. "It's late, Hiccup, and it's cold out tonight. You should get some rest."

Hiccup shook his head. "I don't want to leave."

"Your father will worry."

The preteen snorted. "Oh, yeah, sure. The day Dad ever worries about me is the day I lift an axe and get a date. Leave me alone, Gust."

Gust, if that was his name, slowly put a hand on Hiccup's shoulder, rubbing it soothingly. "She's in Valhalla, son. She'll be okay."

"Halfdan saidâ€|" Hiccup's lips opened, and started to tremble, along with his voice. "Halfdan said she kept leavingâ€|because she couldn't stand me anymore. Isâ€|is that true, Gust?"

"No." On this, the man was clearly firm. "No, Hiccup, that's notâ€|she would neverâ€|she cared about you. A lot."

"Then why did she leave?" Hiccup didn't wait for an answer, but tensed away from Gust's touch, shutting him out, the way he'd shut me out a million times. He turned his face away, wiping the remaining tears. "Go away now. Leave me alone."

### 113. Subconscious

Untold

#### Chapter 113 - Subconscious

Summary: Even in sleep, Hiccup knows when it's safe and when it's not.

\*\*A/N: I don't know where this came from. It's short, I guess. I've had it on my mind for awhile, that Hiccup only sleeps in relaxed and natural positions when he feels safe. From this AU, of course, because I'm pretty sure canon Hiccup only had PTSD after the first movieeee xD Just saying though seriously I'd have PTSD too if I were in his shoes. Well, shoe. Anyway, good day to you all. Thank you for all the reviews, seriously, this is crazy xD \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I guess it was subconscious. My brain just recognized, even in sleep, when I did and didn't feel safe. I don't particularly remember the night it started, but one morning I just woke up in my cell on



Outcast Island and I had my arms covering my head, and I was curled up in a ball on my right side. I started sleeping like that every night, out of habit, I guess, just in case any guards got bored in the night and decided to enter the cell and have some fun with me. It had happened before.<p>

Even when I was on Berk, I recognized that I wasn't completely safe. I slept like that still, in a defensive position, keeping my ear pressed against the floor so I would be woken by footsteps. I had grown so used to sleeping this way, keeping my body taut, even as I rested, that I just continued to do it, and I assumed I would just sleep that way for the rest of my life. It wasn't a big deal to me â€" it was a subconscious defense mechanism, and whatever kept me alive and came naturally to me was good enough for me.

I awoke one morning to a light snowfall outside my window, and Toothless still snoozing by my bedside. It must have been very early, if Toothless wasn't even trying to get me up to go flying yet. I considered trying to get back to sleep, but just as I was drifting off, I realized I was on my back, my arms relaxed by my sides, my brain recognizing the safety of my environment. I guess it was subconscious.

#### 114. Quest for the Frozen Potato

Untold

#### Chapter 114 - Quest for the Frozen Potato

Summary: Hiccup goes on a daring quest to save his best friend.

**\*\*A/N:** Okay, I love this chapter. I know it's unrealistic and it lacks originality and creativity, but I really, really love writing sassy twelve-year-old Hiccup xD he's super fun. Oh, also, you guys should check out my Tumblr blog! You know why? I go by [writerofberk](#) on there, and starting tonight, I'm gonna start dropping minor hints for future events of Unbreakable, not to mention I will be leaking paragraphs and summaries from new stories I've recently begun work on, such as "Kiss by the Ocean", and an HTTYD/Tangled crossover that I can't yet say too much about, as plans for that are not finalized yet. Anyway, I also opened up my ask box on there, so if you have any questions, feel free to drop me a line! Have a good day, all of you. Also, it'd be super appreciated if you guys could drop me some reviews, because I'm hoping to hit a thousand on this story by the end of the year. Ambitious, I know, but you guys spoiled me with nine hundred in a year :D I thought maybe a few more, likeeee sixty...or seventy? I'm not very good at math. That's my rough estimate. Anyway, please review, please enjoy, and Merry Christmas! **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I had always known that my dad didn't love me. It was a known fact, like saying "the sky is blue" or "Outcasts are ugly". I mean, I guess it used to really hurt my feelings when I was a kid, but I mean, I was twelve years old now. I had gotten used to it, and there was too much else I was concerned with to even really think of my father most days. One of those other concerns being, of course, my best friend, who I had to keep a total and complete secret from my

dad, because my best friend was a dragon and my dad hated dragons. They attacked our village nearly every night and day now, barely giving us time to rest up and heal from the last attack before launching a new one.<p>

I'd asked my bud Toothless a few times, in sheer frustration, why his scaly friends felt the need to attack us so much, but he never had an answer for me. But last night I discovered the secret â€" you'll never believe this, but the dragons are being controlled by a queen! If they don't bring enough food back for the queen, she eats them. I know that, because I saw that up close and personal. It made me shudder then and it makes me shudder just talking about it. Unfortunately, the queen smelled us or sensed we were there or something, because she dived for us, but Toothless, being the amazing dragon he is, got us out of there just in time. I wasn't really sure what to do, now that I knew about the dragons and their queen and everything, but I did know that Dad and the village seriously needed to be let in on Toothless and my secret. They had to know that we were being attacked for a reason, and not out of sheer malice or hunger. I made the decision to tell Dad that day, but when I woke up that morning, I was really jittery just thinking about it, and I knew only seeing Toothless would calm me down.

I hopped out of bed, grabbed all the stuff I needed for a day with my buddy and was out the door in seconds flat. But when I reached the cove, I knew something was wrong. There were other dragons there, for one. Dragons normally avoided the cove like the plague, at least the bigger ones. Turns out, Night Furies are pretty territorial, and don't like sharing their land. Or their humans, apparently, as Toothless gets super bent out of shape when I so much as look at another dragon. I feel like telling him we're not dating, but with the way things are going with the girl I like â€" or any girls, really â€" I should probably take what I can get.

But there were other dragons there. Gronckles, Nadders, Zipplebacks, even the rare ones like Nightmares and Whispering Deaths and stuff. And they were all crowding around Toothless and crooning worriedly, which was a bad sign. Dragons don't worry about other dragons unless it's something really serious. Why would they? They can all look after themselves.

I rushed over to Toothless, dropping the basket of fish as I went. The food I'd brought for my buddy spilled all over the grass, but none of the dragons even looked up, which I knew was a super bad sign. I knelt down next to him, taking his chin in my hands. "What is it, bud?" I whispered, scratching him gently. "Talk to me."

A few of the dragons closed in to remove me â€" it had been easy to forget about them in favor of Toothless â€" but the Night Fury growled at them, forcing them to back off. He gave my cheek a kind of morose lick and lifted up his great, black wing, showing off a tiny puncture mark just below it. And, embedded deeply within the blue-black scales, right alongside the puncture mark, was a tiny needle-like stick, clear as glass. I reached over with one hand, soothing Toothless with the other, and gently yanked it out. He didn't even react to the pain, poor Toothless â€" it must have been hurting since early this morning, to have attracted such a crowd. Toothless stared up at me steadily for a second, shifting his eyes deliberately down to the needle. I looked down, too, and promptly dropped it in astonishment. It wasn't a needle, or a stick â€" it was

the sting of a Venomous Vorpent, the deadliest dragon known to man. Its poison could kill both dragon and human, which was why it was so feared by both species. I had never even seen Vorpents up close, and this is coming from the guy who routinely lets any type of dragon near him.

And Toothless, poor Toothless had been stung. The sting of a Vorpent was almost always fatal, and I knew right then that there was probably no hope. And all the while, my buddy kept staring at me, as if waiting for me to start crying or sobbing, or promising him empty comforts. Why would I waste his last day doing that? I bet the queen had done this to him, the evil thing. In fact, now that I glanced around at the other dragons, I felt horribly guilty for missing it. They all bore distinct signs of the queen's rage, claw marks up and down their skin and discolored bruises from that remarkably armored tail.

Of course. My anger reached a boil. If the queen couldn't have Toothless to rant and rage at, why not just take it out on other dragons?

I jumped to my feet, looking down at Toothless. "This isn't the end, guys," I announced, striding the length of the cove, turning around suddenly so I didn't stray too far from Toothless. "Thereâ€|there are cures to the poison, we just have to find them."

But my blood was like ice when I remembered what Gust had told me: the only cure to Vorpent poison was the vegetable that no one dared name. Well, I called it the potato, but everyone told me not to say such things, because naming the vegetable that no one dared name was bad luck. Of course, being me, I didn't listen.

And the nearest potato was in America, if such a placeâ€|

"Wait!" I actually jumped up and down as a new hope took hold. "Toothless, buddy, I've got it! I've got it! There's a potato on Hysteric Isle, I bet we could get it for you! We could sneak in there without anyone ever knowing and be back before sundown! It's perfect!"

Toothless just looked at me. I could practically read his mind, and hear his doubts, but I decided to ignore them. There was the slightest possibility that Toothless could live, and if there was even the tiniest chance, I knew then that I had to take it. Even if most people said that the potato didn't really exist after all, and Norbert the Nutjob, chief of the Hysterics, was just making that up to get people to come to his island so he could sacrifice them, or kill them with his double-sided axe.

But the problem was, Toothless and I had mastered the art of flying months ago, but I couldn't just saddle him up and ride him to Hysteric Isle. He was sick, very sick. He didn't feel like going. And I seriously didn't think I could train another dragon here in two minutes, which was probably all the time we had, but I refused to believe it. Even if I ran the risk of having my hand bitten off, I had to try.

I chose an unremarkable-looking Gronckle, who warmed to me surprisingly quickly â€" quicker than Toothless, even, although that could have been because I carried no weapons when I faced the

Gronckle. Toothless had made me throw them " my weapons " all away a long time ago, and seeing as he had the unfair advantage over me of I'd do literally anything for him, I had to do so.

So me and the Gronckle set off on the quest for the potato, which sounds pretty unremarkable when you think of it, and of course, you're probably wondering now how my dad, who has not appeared in this story once, ties in to any of this. Just shush, okay, I'm working on that.

Anyway, I mounted the Gronckle and we started for the island. At any other time, I would have been positively quivering with fear over the thought of facing Hysteric warriors, but I was so busy being mad at the queen and absolutely terrified for Toothless that I didn't have any room to feel fear for myself. And normally, when Toothless and I flew, we talked a lot, me raising my voice to be heard over the wind in our ears, so the silence on the ride was a little noticeable. It was just another reminder of what had happened. But if Toothless had been stung in the early hours of this morning, as I suspected, he still had a few hours to live. Enough time for me to steal the potato, get back to Outcast Island, and feed it to him. I was guessing, here. I didn't really know how you treated Vorpentitis, but I was guessing you fed the victim the potato.

We made it to Hysteric Isle pretty quick, but right away things started getting tricky. For one, it was a lot colder up on Hysteric Isle than it had ever been on Outcast Island. Snow covered everything here, and there were icebergs floating in their seas. Icebergs!

I shivered, pulling my flimsy vest tighter around me. My clothes were so ripped these days that they didn't offer much warmth, and I made myself a mental note to patch them just as soon as Toothless got better. Because he would get better, at least if it was up to me.

The Gronckle and I exchanged glances as we started running through the snow, which, admittedly, didn't feel so much like running as it did wading. And right away, there were sounds of talk and laughter coming from the center building in the plaza " the Hysterics' Great Hall, I was guessing.

"That must be where they do their human sacrifices." I tried not to shudder as the thought ran across my mind, instead focusing on what I'd come here for. Toothless.

The Hysterics, it seemed, were in the middle of a party, which would make things easier for me. They'd be so distracted that I could find the potato quickly and quietly, but then there was the issue of I didn't really know what it looked like. Where would it be?

I knew I couldn't just kick open the doors of the Great Hall, and there was no question of flying in. There were windows in the back, though, which solved this problem pretty quickly. I dived inside, ending up in the corner, right behind a huge table full of rowdy Hysterics. I fell to the floor instantly, my legs trembling, praying that no one had seen me.

No one raised the alarm to report an Outcast sighting, so I guessed I was on the right track. Outcast. I wrinkled my nose as I thought the word. I knew that that was probably disloyal of me, but I really,

really hated being an Outcast. Our reputation with the other tribes was terrible. Turned out, we weren't really big on fair play.

While in my reverie of Outcasts and Hysterics, I started creeping along on my hands and knees, bumping into something with my forehead and probably earning a great big red mark. I jumped back in surprise, rubbing my forehead and examining the thing I had bumped.

It was an ice block, taller than me (which wasn't saying a lot) and much wider (which wasn't saying a lot, either). Looking around once to make sure nobody had yet noticed me, because I had the creepy feeling that I was being watched, I ducked around the other side of the ice block and looked down at it. What could be so big and troublesome that they'd need to keep it frozen?

It was a man. A clearly dead man, for nobody could remain frozen for long and still live later, but he was a handsome man, I suppose. An impressive blond beard and mustache with ice chips in them, and clutched in his fist, a tiny, brown speckled thing with an arrow stuck deep within it. I scrubbed a little at the ice, trying to see what it was, when a shout echoed around the Hall, making me jump.

"Intruder! Intruder! I see him there, bold as brass, Chief, right by your frozen Papa!"

I jumped a mile in the air and gave a very unmanly squeak. Chief Norbert (who was much bigger than I expected) came zipping off his golden throne in no time flat, picking me up by my collar and readying me for something really terrible.

"Who are you?" he demanded, spraying spit on my face as he slammed me into the wall behind. But I didn't think it was the right time to mention that I didn't want to be spit on. I just tried to subtly free one of my hands to wipe it away. "Who sent you?" he continued grilling me, his face inches from mine. "What tribe are you from?"

"No one! Uhâ€¦no oneâ€¦no one sent me, what are you, crazy?" I laughed nervously.

Norbert drew back, a tic starting in one eye. Okay, clearly, he didn't like being accused of being crazy. Oh, duh, he'd been excluded from the Viking tribes for years because he was too crazy for us, and we'd told him so. Way to go, Hiccup. Dragon to Duhville. Population, one.

"I mean, I'mâ€¦uhâ€¦" I cleared my throat, and coughed. Time for a little harmless deception, I guess. Even if I really hated it, I could make an exception this one time. "I mean, uhâ€¦I'm, I'm one of you! I'm a Hysteric!"

Norbert regarded me suspiciously. He released me from the wall, which I guess was a good sign. "What's your name?" he barked distrustfully, which wasn't a good sign.

"Hiccâ€¦dan! Hiccdan!" Sorry for borrowing your name, Halfdan.

"You're not a Hysteric!" Norbert bellowed at me. "If you were, we'd

have tossed you out the day you were born! You're too runty, and weak!"

"No, but I really amâ€"

But clearly Norbert had heard enough. "Who sent you? What tribe are you? Tell the truth!"

"Okay, okay!" I relented as he shook me violently, and his hands started pressing in on my throat. "I'mâ€|my name is Hiccup, andâ€|umâ€|Chief Norbert the Nutjob, uh, sirâ€|your Highness, sir, umâ€|my best friend is very sick, and I've heard that only you have the cure to his illness. I wasâ€|I was wondering if I couldâ€|just take it, and repay the favor later?"

Norbert regarded me. "What's the cure?"

"Umâ€|well, he's been stung by the Vorpent," I admitted. "And he needs the potato to feel better, so if you could just please let me have itâ€|it would save his life, it really would. He's my very best and only friend and he has a very long, full life ahead of him."

"Quit your gabbling," Norbert ordered. I ceased talking at once. "You're not getting my potato, and that's that. Hysterics! Seize him!"

"Wait!" I dodged as the nearest table cleared, Hysterics rushing from it to try and grab me. "I'mâ€|notâ€|waitâ€|I'mâ€|uhâ€|" I ducked underneath an empty table as Hysterics swarmed it, trying to grab me. They were all too big to fit under there, though. I upended the table on them, covering them in maple syrup, carrots and bread.

Seeing them covered in food gave me an idea and I traveled to another empty table while they struggled to shift that one, and I grabbed up a bowl of onion soup. "Food fight!" I announced, flinging it onto the first Hysteric I saw.

Norbert started screaming, and a few Hysterics actually started attacking each other, mostly because one of them accidentally hit another with a plate. They started throwing bits of ham and cups of pudding at each other, sheltering behind tables and whatnot.

This was actually working out better than I'd hoped, and I could see the Gronckle over on the other side of the room, steadily melting the potato. Clever dragon must have remembered why we were here even in all the chaos.

But she was melting it too slowly, and I needed to keep the distraction going for longer. I grabbed up a flagon of mead and dumped it over Norbert's head before flinging a whole pot of stew at somebody else, ducking under fighting pairs as I made my way over to the Gronckle on the other end of the room. The potato wasn't completely unfrozen, so I had to leave the arrow in, but I figured we could deal with that later. Stuffing it into my vest, I gave her a grateful pat on the nose. "Thank you so much. Good girl. Oh, no!" I grabbed a cart of fish and wheeled it right in the path of a passing Hysteric. The Hysteric wound up on the ground, a nasty bruise blooming on his head.

I traded a quick smile with the Gronckle before I heard Norbert's voice. "The potato! It's gone!"

The room went into a panic, and people started looking all over for me. The Gronckle and I were actually almost to the door when somebody spotted us, and started squealing his head off. We were tossed back into the room, but it was then that somebody knocked over a row of candles, and you couldn't have paid them to be sensible after that. Everyone was screaming and grabbing buckets to put out the fire, everyone except Norbert. He grabbed me and pinned me to the half-frozen dead man, and my hand slipped into a crack in the ice. I felt something weird brushing by my fingers, something that didn't belong on a dead man: glass. I let my fingers explore the object instead of doing so myself while Norbert talked, spraying spit on me again.

I worked my hand out of the crack, clutching the glass face as he rambled on about the axe of doom deciding my fate and whatnot, and then, when I had it free, I flung it at him. I wasn't particularly good at flinging anything, but luck must have been on my side, because Norbert gave a squeal like a baby dragon and toppled backward, clutching at his eye. In between his fingers, I could see that his eye was bloodshot and streaming horribly.

I picked up the object from the floor again " it seemed a bad omen to leave it after it had just saved my life " and started for the door again. This time, nobody stopped me.

I didn't actually stop to examine the mysterious object until the Gronckle and I were in the sky and halfway back to Outcast Island, feeling certain in our victory. A strange sort of compass, with nine needles instead of one. One of the needles pointed to a tiny crown scratched on the glass face, a crown surrounded by flames. And another one pointed resolutely west instead of north. And it kept ticking incessantly, too.

I tucked it back in my vest with the potato and arrow. Never mind a weird compass now. I had gotten the potato, and that was all that mattered.

We landed in the cove by late afternoon, and for a second I was afraid we were too late. Toothless was lying still as stone on the grassy ground, his head between his paws. But slowly, his green eyes flickered open as we walked forward, and he lifted his head weakly. I forgot about the dragons again, even the Gronckle that had flown me there, when I locked eyes with Toothless. In an instant I was on my knees in the grass, grabbing the potato out of my vest and "oh, the arrow was still in it. I grabbed the arrow out and pulled. It came out easier than expected. I dropped the arrow on the ground, surprised that it had come out whole, and offering Toothless the potato carefully.

"C'mon, bud," I whispered. "This will make you better, I promise. It's okay, buddy, c'mon. Sit up and eat it." I held the potato in my hand, waiting for his move. When he finally raised his head up higher and carefully took the potato in his teeth, I smiled in relief. I had been afraid that he'd be too weak to even eat when we came back.

The potato seemed to take a long time to take effect, but when it did, the change was instantly noticeable. Toothless was up in

minutes, cantering around me playfully again, his spirit and health restored. I couldn't help but laugh, in relief and joy and also just a little bit of amusement.

Toothless came to a stop above me, pressing his forehead against mine. I could hear the unspoken words. \_Thank you. \_

"Anything for you, buddy," I whispered, kissing his nose.

I slipped home that night, smiling up at the stars, intensely grateful for everything that had happened. Sure, maybe I had nearly been killed several times, but Toothless had made it through, and we were both alright in the end, Thor only knows how. And honestly, it was worth it, every second of it. I entered the house and intended to just sneak upstairs past my dad, but he was sitting up at the table as if waiting for me, and something in me, the part of me that still hoped we could have a relationship, offered him an awkward wave before I started climbing the stairs. And then I remembered my promise to tell him about the queen today.

I paused on the stairs, on my hands and knees. I looked back at my dad. Not today. Tomorrow, maybe.

"Hiccup?" Dad came to the bottom of the stairs, staring at me. "Why are you covered in food?"

Oh, oops. Guess I had forgotten to change or get cleaned up before coming home. I unconsciously swiped at a bit of maple syrup, accidentally smearing the sticky substance around on my cheek. "Umâ€¦food fight? It got a little violent."

"Food fight?" Dad's eyes narrowed to slits â€" sensing my lie.

"It was really heated," I told him. And wasn't that the truth.

"Who did you have this food fight with?"

"Theâ€¦the other kids," I said in surprise.

"Really? Because no one in the village has seen you all day," he informed me.

Oh. I bit my lip, shrinking back. "Umâ€¦okay, uhâ€¦"

"Hiccup, I don't appreciate you lying to me!"

"I'm sorry!" I flinched. Let's just get the worst over with. "I went to Hysteric Isle, okay? I stole some stuff and got into a food fight with the Hysteric soldiers, butâ€¦it was better than being killedâ€¦right?" I glanced hopefully up at him.

"You did what?"

So I retold the story, except I edited out the fact that I went for Toothless and that I flew a dragon, making it out like I stole a boat and sailed there. And I also edited out the potato, because obviously it was no more.

"What did you steal?" Dad's brows drew down.



"Uhâ€|this," I held up the arrow brightly, "and this." I held up the ticking compass. "Not very impressive, I know," I added hastily, "butâ€|butâ€|Dad?" He was drawing nearer and nearer to me, not like he was going to hit me or anything, more like he was in a trance. He took the compass from me, and then the arrow, examining every inch of them, tapping on the glass of the compass and running a finger over the arrowhead.

"Can I have these?" he demanded roughly, when he was done examining them.

I couldn't mask my surprise. "Uhâ€|sure."

He tucked them in his armor and then he just kind of stood there, rocking back and forth on his feet awkwardly. I stared at him for a second, wondering what part of my journey he was going to berate first.

"Umâ€|you'veâ€|you've done good." He patted my shoulder, and then seemed to just vanish instantly on the spot, because one second he was there and the next, he was gone.

If I hadn't seen his mouth move, I wouldn't have believed the words left his lips. My father â€" who hated me, and had never praised me for anything â€" had just told me that I'd done something well. As if there was anything else to make me happier than I already was tonight.

I knew that my dad didn't love me or anything, butâ€|but he was proud of me. And that was a step in the right direction, right?

Tomorrow, I thought to myself as I walked upstairs, turned out my light and crawled under the covers. Tomorrow, I'd tell him about Toothless for sure.

## 115. First Step

Untold

Chapter 115 - First Step

Summary: Continuation of Two Steps Forward, One Step Back. Done by request.

\*\*A/N: This is dedicated to TheOneWithTheScar. She requested a continuation to the chapter mentioned in the summary, and she asked me to update Untold, so...yeah. Hey, guys. Wow! I haven't updated this since last year! xD xD xD xD xD Oh, I think I'm hilarious and I'm not. Please save me from myself. Anyway, I am off to entertain ideas of no real value. Happy New Year, and good night/morning/evening/afternoon :D \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I regretted my decision the moment the door was fully open. Stoick didn't just look pitying, an emotion I already didn't like when directed at me, but he also just looked so sad that I lowered my gaze to the floor immediately, feeling my cheeks beginning to heat as my mind flashed back to the issue at hand.<p>

We had been having fun, laughing and joking around, and I had ruined it. I ruined a lot of things, but I liked to think that I could be normal enough into fooling Stoick that I wasn't as much of a freak as I really was. I peeked up at him again, but he was just standing there, waiting for me to speak, so I took it upon myself to start the conversation.

"I'm s-sorry," I stuttered, clasping my hands together in front of me, struggling to think of how to explain. "Alvin justâ€|he liked to, umâ€|t-tie me up, you knowâ€|handcuffs and stuffâ€|and umâ€|" I trailed off nervously as Stoick moved for the first time since I'd come out onto the landing. He knelt down carefully in front of me, taking my chin in his hands. The movement was very slow and deliberate, giving me enough time to pull away if I wanted to.

I did want to, but I think I'd already caused him enough hurt and frustration for the day, so I just stood there as he, at last, got down to my level.

"Look at me."

I lifted my gaze hesitantly to meet his gray one â€" most of the sadness and pity had vanished, which was a relief, but it had been replaced by something firm and steely, and I had a feeling I wasn't going to like whatever he said next.

"I'm sorry that Alvin hurt you," he began steadily, never breaking my gaze. "I'm sorry that I wasn't there to look after you. I'm sorry that I've hurt you sometimes, and I'm sorry that I don't think before I act. But I will never hurt you. I will never hit you, Hiccup, and I promise you have no reason to be afraid of me."

"Do you regret it?" I don't know where the words came from â€" they just spilled out of me, awkward and insecure and scared as I was right then.

Stoick frowned. "Regret what?"

"Regretâ€|this." I gestured mostly to myself, but also a little bit to him, as well. "Regret meeting me. Agreeing to be my father again, letting me stay on Berk. Do youâ€|do you regret any of that?"

"Oh." His shoulders slumped, and he sounded so sad right then that I regretted asking. He did regret it, he was just too nice to say so. "Hiccup, if I could do anything over in life, it would not be meeting you. Youâ€|are one of the best things that ever happened to me. You are the last thing in life that I regret."

"But I'm still on your listâ€|aren't I?"

"No." He shook his head vehemently, as if hoping this would help me get the point. "And I'm sorry that you think you are, but I promiseâ€|I promise I don't regret you. I regret that you don't trust me, and I regret that Alvin and I have hurt you, but I don't regret you."

I tried to find a way out of the conversation, running through possibilities in my head. At last, I settled on my honest answer. "I justâ€|think you would, because I make you upset."

"What?"

"I make you upset. I mean, I see it. You sounded really sad when you understood what was wrong, and every time something like this happens, you're always"

"You're not what upsets me."

"I'm not? I'm not?"

"No. What upsets me is this, this is what Alvin's done to you. If he hadn't hurt you in the way he had, you wouldn't act like this. You wouldn't panic when I restrain your hands, you wouldn't have even noticed."

The idea of never noticing someone's touch, just only half-realizing it was there, was a wonderful one. I wished that I could be that easygoing about people touching me.

"Is that what upsets you? That I'm a freak?"

"No, Hiccup, you're misunderstanding. I'm upset because you've been hurt. I'm upset because you've been traumatized, and now you're trying to lead a normal life, and it just keeps cropping up."

I knitted my brows. "Do you want me to try and be normal, then? Because I've been trying, honestly, and"

"You're misunderstanding again."

"Sorry."

"What I mean is it's not you. You're as normal as you can be, under the circumstances. It's Alvin. The idea of him putting his hands on you, of raising you like his and lying to you and beating you, that's what upsets me. It angers and upsets me because you're mine to protect, to look after."

\_You're mine. \_

At one point in my stay on Berk, I'd only have had to hear those two words strung together to send me into a full-on panic attack, running for Toothless and halfway into the sky before Stoick could explain what he'd meant.

But now, I focused on the words after that: to protect, to look after. Stoick didn't see me as property, to be owned and traded off, to be broken down and repaired again. He saw me as a human being, not beneath him. This realization was so incredible, the realization that he really didn't see me in the way Alvin did, and the realization that he'd said something that should have made me run

It was so incredible that I met his eyes and offered him a small, barely there smile. Because, for the first time ever, I think I just took a step forward.

Untold

## Chapter 116 - It Hurts

Summary: Sometimes, it hurts unexpectedly, sometimes it's a sting or a throb or an ache, but it's always there.

**\*\*A/N:** Hello, everyone! I hope everyone had a happy New Year! :D And this was just a little something that occurred to me last night, but I was half-asleep and I spent like two straight minutes telling myself that I was just too tired to write it out xD and today was busy, so I had to wait until now to do something about it xP Anyway, enjoy! Please review!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>It hurts. It hurts sometimes with all the force of a physical blow, stinging sharply and then fading, the echo of my own pain still lingering in my heart. It hurts sometimes with the strength of an ocean wave, rising up and up and up and pulling me under completely, so I suffocate and drown under the crushing weight of so much pain. It hurts sometimes unexpectedly, like the blizzards on Berk. One second, it's slightly cloudy white skies, and the next, the snow is falling thick and fast, so thick I can't see, biting and stinging at my exposed cheeks and hands.<p>

It hurts sometimes when somebody casually tosses out hurtful, insensitive words, mindless of how it feels or what it means to me. It hurts whenever I see the terrifying glint of handcuffs, or wake up to the scarlet gleam of my own blood. It hurts when people mention my scars, or when they tell me I don't weigh enough. It hurts when people look me up and down, like they're trying to decide whether I'm worthy of their time.

It hurts so badly and so often and so much, because I know that my only real option is to keep it inside. I could try to talk about it, but I can never find the right words to say, and when I do, they just stick in my throat, like only my vocal cords register that I'm not ready to talk about it. When I am finally at a point where the words have left my throat and are on my tongue, just sitting there, waiting, I always end up staying silent, anyway. Because so much of the time, Stoick has dealt with so much already, just being a chief and struggling under his workload and trying to deal with me. And I can't bring myself to add to his load, and become more of a burden than I already am, because Stoick really doesn't need to hear me whining at him all the time. I want to talk to him, or somebody, but I know that my best option is to just ignore the pain and pretend I'm alright.

But it hurts.

## 117. Hangover

Untold

## Chapter 117 - Hangover

Summary: Continuation of chapter 52, 'Drunken'. Hiccup wakes up with a nasty headache and no recollections.

\*\*A/N: Hi, guys! Sorry for my long absence. I wasn't really busy or anything, I just lost the inspiration to keep writing on this story for a bit. Luckily, I regained it through this chapter, and I also have a challenge/proposal for you guys. Will you pick a number for me between 1 and 57? I have a list of one-shots that I plan to write for this AU, and it numbers 57 now. #30 is off limits, as I've already written it. If you guys don't want to, you don't have to, but it might get chapters up faster. Thanks! Please review! :) \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I could tell Stoick was mad. He was staring down into the depths of his breakfast bowl, stirring determinedly, with his lips pursed, and he failed to greet me, even with a smile. When I sat down at the table, struggling to think around the pounding headache, I heard my stomach growl, which was weird because I didn't even feel hungry. I just felt sort of sick, like I was going to vomit, only I had a funny feeling I'd already done that. I don't know. I couldn't remember much from last night, to be honest.<p>

I wasn't sure whether to ask Stoick why he was mad at me or not, because on the one hand, I wasn't sure I wanted to know, I wasn't sure I was up to being scolded this morning, and furthermore, I'd learned in my sixteen years that people just tended to be mad at me. On the other hand, though, this silence was becoming uncomfortable.

"Are you hungry?" Stoick glanced up from his bowl when my stomach growled, and though he still looked mad, his eyes softened when they landed on me.

"I'm okay," I muttered, but he ignored me and got up to ladle some porridge into a bowl, setting it down in front of me. He resumed his seat and his silence once more, taking a small slurp of porridge out of his own bowl.

I fiddled with my spoon for a second before dipping it into my porridge, but even as I raised the spoon to take a bite, I lowered it just as quickly again. "Stoick?"

"Yes?"

"Isâ€|is somethingâ€|wrong?"

"No." His knuckles were white from how hard he was clenching his spoon. "No, nothing's wrong."

I put my spoon down again. "You look really mad." Even I didn't know what kept me talking; my years of experience with Alvin should have left me all too eager to escape conversations with angry people, but it bothered me when Stoick was upset, especially at me. Gobber said this was because we cared about each other, or something like that.

Stoick sighed, still staring into the depths of his bowl. "I'm not angry with you, Hiccup," he admitted, lifting gray eyes to meet mine. "It's just Gobberâ€|you know what, actually, I am angry with you," he changed tone suddenly, his eyes narrowing slightly. "Because you should have known better than to drink unfamiliar substances,

especially when Gobber offers them to you!"

"Wait! What?" My world was now thoroughly rocked. I had absolutely no recollection of drinking unfamiliar substances, as Stoick called them, but like I said, I was also having trouble remembering last night. I suppose anything could have happened. "I didn't drink any unfamiliar substances!"

"\_Mead\_, Hiccup," he said flatly, dropping his spoon into his bowl with a noise that made me jump in my chair. "You shouldn't have been drinking mead."

"Iâ€¦I did?" But to be honest, that was sounding a little familiar. Did I seriously drink mead last night? As memories began crashing down on me, mostly fuzzy recollections of interacting with other people, I gave a groan, sinking down in my chair. "Is that why I feel like my head's about to split in two?"

"Yes. You have a hangover." He sounded angrier than ever at this, and I squirmed in my seat a little before finding my only defense.

"Well, it was my first time! How was I supposed to know not to drink anything Gobber offers to me? How was I supposed to know you'd be mad?"

"This is \_Gobber\_, Hiccup," he said stonily. "You should know to never take anything from him." His gray eyes were still flashing, but I repeated myself as calmly as I could.

"I'm sorry for upsetting you, but I didn't know it would upset you. It's not really like Vikings have an age limit on drinking or anything! How was I to know?"

The fire in Stoick's eyes died abruptly, and he glanced back down at his bowl, swallowing before speaking. "Alright. That's fair. You've never had a drink before now, so I guess you're right in saying that you didn't know it would upset me."

At least he was listening to my side, I thought. That ought to count for something.

"I will, though," he pressed on determinedly, "I will be having a talk with Gobber about this. I don't ever want him to give you that much mead if it makes you loopy."

"Loopy?" I repeated in confusion. I didn't remember being loopy. I remembered being in a drinking contest with Snotlout â€" several, actually â€" and feeling like I was on top of the world when I beat Tuffnutâ€¦loopy. The word repeated itself in my mind and another memory crashed over me like a ton of bricks. My cheeks warmed, and I almost didn't want to askâ€¦but I had to. "Did Iâ€¦did I laugh at your beard while I was drunk?"

He nodded, eliciting a groan from me. I hoped Snotlout would never find out about this, otherwise I would \_never \_live it down.

Untold

## Chapter 118 - Hiccup the Heartthrob

Summary: Love is in the air, which is unfortunate for the King of the Wilderwest.

**\*\*A/N: ATTENTION \*\***

**\*\*PLEASE READ \*\***

**\*\*This is set AFTER Unbreakable, assuming everyone mentioned in this chapter actually, you know, survives. You just never know what's going to happen, and when plots change, eh? Like just today I found a better way to make the newest Unbreakable chapter work. But anyway, let's assume for the sake of this chapter that Hiccup and Stoick both lived, and that Hiccup was crowned King of the Wilderwest and they all lived happily ever after. Okay? (I mention nothing about the traitor mark, as I'm saving all of that for Unbreakable...) Anyway, this chapter title - Hiccup the Heartthrob - I snorted when I thought of it, but I knew it was the right one for this chapter. \*\***

**\*\*And the reason Hiccup has so many admirers now, I guess you'd call them, is mostly because he's the King of the Wilderwest and all the girls want to go out with the King of the Wilderwest xD Oh, and I imagine this is set when Hiccup is eighteen, so he's definitely growing into his looks and getting taller and everything, so that's another reason, I guess. He finally appears masculine to the girls xD anyway, enjoy the chapter! I will get started on the number requests after this holiday!\*\***

**\* \* \***

><p>Valentine's Day.<p>

You might as well have called it Ragnarok for the response I was likely to give to it. Not that I'd ever had terrible luck with girls or anything â€" most girls just didn't give me the time of day. So, when Gobber explained the holiday to me the night before it started, I really didn't think much was going to happen.

I was just glad that this was the first Valentine's Day I spent where I was not in a cell, being relentlessly hunted by Alvin, or trying to be crowned King of the Wilderwest. Been there, done all three. If I was going to do anything for Valentine's Day, it probably would involve my friends â€" everything purely platonic. No use dragging mushy, messy romantic feelings into anything, even though Astrid and I had kissed once or twice.

So, when I awoke on the morning of Valentine's Day, I was surprised to find a Messenger Dragon sitting in my room, at the head of my bed, a piece of paper clutched in his mouth.

I took the letter and thanked the dragon, who cuddled up beside me instantly afterward. Whenever a Messenger Dragon delivered a letter to me, they just didn't seem to want to leave, and I was terrible at saying no to the cute little guys.

So he cuddled up against my legs, purring and closing his eyes, as I wrinkled my brow and struggled to think of the last correspondence

I'd had with somebody outside of my tribe. The Murderous? Yes, that sounded right. They'd been having a feud with the Bashem-Oiks, and both tribes were starting to get concerned that the other would suddenly turn violent, andâ€¦well, it had been a big mess, and I'd finally had to come down there and settle things in person. Maybe one of the chieftains was sending me a letter to let me know how things were going with them.

Smiling at the thought, I opened the letter, scanning the first sentence.

\_Dear King Hiccup of the Wilderwestâ€¦\_

I frowned at the salutation, still unused to the title, but I continued reading all the same. There were a lot of scratch-outs and ink blots, as if the person writing it hadn't been quite sure what to say, or how to say it.

\_I just wanted you to know \_

\_I thought I'd send you this letter to say,\_

\_I just wanted to say\_

\_I thought it'd be cool\_

\_I just wanted you to know, \_they'd finally settled on,

\_I just wanted you to know that I really admire you. You're really strong to be leading the whole Archipelago, and you must be really smart to know how to do it without making everyone kill each other. Do you want to meet me tonight, and talk? \_

\_Sincerely, \_

\_Alva, of the Peaceable Tribe \_

Now that last part was kind of weird. I got letters from a lot of people every day, thanking me for helping them, you know, find their sheep or whatever, but it was really rare for them to send me a letter asking if we could meet if all they wanted was do was \_talk\_. Still, the girl seemed nice enough, and it wasn't like I had any pressing engagements. When you led the whole Archipelago, it was like your work was never done, but I could always do it another day. Besides, I didn't want to be a stuffy leader, too high on myself to look down and remember the people who supported and followed me. Without them, I'd be nothing. I owed practically everything to the people who'd been loyal to me, even when Alvin had rendered me something beyond broken.

Caution urged me to watch my back, but I wouldn't exactly be alone or defenseless; Toothless could guard me better than anyone I knew, and I had a sword that I wasn't afraid to use if this was a trap, set for me by somebody who didn't appreciate the way I ran things. It's happened before.

"Toothless, looks like we're gonna have a fun night," I tossed him the letter, though I knew he couldn't read it, and he lifted his head groggily from where he'd been snoozing. A sharp tap on the back of my hand alerted me to another Messenger Dragon, but again, this was so



normal that I merely reached for the letter, picking the dragon up and letting him sit in my lap.

Believe it or not, this person said pretty much the same things as Alva, minus the 'do you want to meet' part. This girl sounded a little shier, but she had the nerve to add, 'You're really good-looking' to the end of her letter, so maybe she wasn't so shy after all. Either way, I promptly made Toothless burn it. It wasn't that I didn't appreciate her taking the time to write me, but if Tuffnut ever found that, I would never get a moment's peace. He would rib me to the moon and back.

But the weird thing was, it was like that all day. All these people sent me letters " people I'd never spoken to, people I'd never even helped with anything, and mostly girls " sent me these appreciation notes talking about how much they liked me. I mean, it was insane. I couldn't figure out why they were choosing today to make the letters start pouring in, but it was probably just bad timing. Maybe Alva had told her friends she was hoping to meet me, and they just wanted to, too. If that was the case, there was no need for them to sound so nervous, and like it'd be an "honor" if I bothered to visit their "humble little island". I mean, c'mon! I might have been a King, but that doesn't mean I sighed and griped every time I had to take time out of my day to meet the "peasants" or whatever they thought I saw them as.

It was just kind of weird that they were all coming in at once, but I left them in a stack on my bed, planning to answer them later that day, when I had the time. First I had to, as Alva had said, stop everyone from killing each other.

\* \* \*

><p><em>Bring a weapon! <em>

\_Wear an extra layer, it's cold out tonight! \_

\_Don't stay out too late. \_

\_No unfamiliar substances. \_

These were the kinds of things Dad said to me whenever I told him I was going somewhere. It was completely ridiculous for him to act that way, so stubbornly overprotective, especially considering I went out on my own all the time, but he still insisted on hearing from me before I left, just to nag me about the above things. So I shouted to him that I was going out as I started buckling on my riding vest, and grabbing everything I needed for that night.

But I respected him, and I respected his rules, so I was willing to follow along with them, if they put his mind at ease. And besides, they made me feel safe. Loved. So I went with them.

"Where to?" he asked, coming into the living room, and taking a swig out of his mug.

"Out with this girl."

"Oh?" He dragged out the word his eyebrows rising, a grin curling up his face.

"Yeah," I responded, uncertain as to what he wanted. He seemed really pleased about something.

"Cute girl, huh? What's her name?"

"Alva," I replied, mystified. "And I don't really know if she's cute, I've never actually met her."

"You haven't?" Stoick's grin dropped a little, and when I explained to him about the letter, and showed it to him, even, it was completely gone.

"She probably just needs help with a sick sheep or something, and it's too hard to explain in a letter," I added hastily, knowing he was thinking it was a trap or something. "Honestly, I'm sure it's nothing important."

"Hiccupâ€|"

"Stoick, I got it, okay? I'll look after myself," I told him, annoyed.

"No, Hiccup, it's not that, it's just Alva soundsâ€"

"Yeah, I know, it sounds a little suspicious but if it really was a trap, I wouldn't have gotten hundreds of these."

"Hundreds?"

"Okay, maybe that's exaggerating a little, butâ€"

"You got hundreds of these?"

"They're on my bed, I was answering them," I told him, uncertain as to why he looked so worried. "Look, it'll be fine. You can read them if you want."

"Hiccup, you do not want to do this."

"What do you mean?" I demanded. "I'll be fine, of course I want to do this."

"No, I'm telling you, this isn'tâ€"

"It's not a trap. I'll be fine."

Stoick's lips twitched. He looked amused again, and that grin was back on his face, but instead of a slightly sly edge to it, it was more like, \_oh, gods, I gotta see this. \_"Alright, Hiccup. Alright. Go on. Go meet this Ava."

"Alva," I corrected heatedly, not knowing why he looked so amused but annoyed over it all the same. I slung one leg over Toothless' back and took off into the night sky.

\* \* \*

><p>I'd sent Alva back a reply as quick as I could, and asked her to meet me on a tiny but pleasant beach on Peaceable Island that was

particularly breathtaking at night. I'd chosen the spot because although it was relatively private, every sound we made could be heard for miles " if she turned out to be an army of, I don't know, bloodthirsty savages who disagreed with the way I ran things " the Peaceables would hear, and put a stop to that if we couldn't. I'd visited here many times before, just to make sure everything was going alright with them " Peaceables never complained about anything, and it was like pulling teeth to get them to admit something was wrong " so I landed on the beach, content to just watch starlight bounce off the water and fish jump in the sea until Alva showed up. If she was going to show up at all. Yeah, that's probably what this was about. She'd probably sent that letter a joke, and was now hiding in the bushes somewhere sniggering her head off at my stupidity. All the same, I kept one hand on the hilt of my sword as I watched the water moving. The tide was going out, and it was peaceful to watch.<p>

But whatever I expected, Alva showed up some ten minutes later, breathless and gasping, grinning so widely I thought her face might break. She was also blushing, from what I could gather in the dim starlight, and she hesitated, taking a moment to catch her breath before coming to a stop before me. "Iâ€|I can't believe you agreed to come!"

I smiled at her enthusiasm, taking a hasty seat on the sand, patting the gritty ground beside me, inviting her to join me.

She was a cute little thing, pixie thin and slightly elfish, with lots of thick, red hair and a very thin, very flushed face.

She was gazing raptly at me the entire time she sat down, and when she was finally seated, she let out a little squeak. "The King of the Wilderwest! I just can't believe it."

"Uh," I raised my hand slightly to interrupt her, "please, just call me Hiccup. None of that 'King' stuff. Please."

"Oh. Oh, yes. Sure. Alright. Alright. Hiccup." She breathed my name out in one long exhale, sounding awed.

Her constant scrutiny was making me uncomfortable, so I turned instead to the sky and sea, gesturing to it. "It's beautiful here, isn't it?"

"Oh, oh, yes," she sighed happily, tearing her gaze away from me for mere seconds to stare out at the stars. "Yes, it's perfect here. It's the perfect spot."

We sat there for a couple minutes in silence, just staring out, and I turned my head to speak with her, to ask what she was calling me here for.

It was happening before I knew what was even going on. Her lips were suddenly on mine, pressing against me with a kind of fierce intensity. One of her hands found my hair, running her fingers through it over and over, and the other fisted tight around the fabric of my tunic, physically yanking me closer. I was so shocked that I couldn't even think to push her away. My eyes remained wide open, staring at her closed lids, my heart thumping like crazy in my chest as I struggled to make sense of what she was doing, what was

going on.

Her hand slid under my shirt then, and my instincts kicked in, my brain jolting back into action. I put my hands on her chest and pushed her away, as firmly as I could without hurting her. Her eyes fluttered open, and she smiled, breathless again. "Wow, that was really good! Maybe next time we can get some tongue!"

"Alva!" I'm pretty sure I was blushing red as a cherry by then instead of her, my embarrassment so intense that all I wanted to do was bury myself in the sand.

"What?"

"Iâ€¦I didn'tâ€¦I don'tâ€¦I meanâ€¦you just kissed me!"

"Yeah, duh."

"Well, in case you didn't notice, I didn't come here to be kissed!"

"Wait, you didn't?" Her nose wrinkled up, her confusion apparent.

"I came to help you! I thought maybe the Peaceable Tribe was having trouble â€" I came to check on things, and meet with you, but I never intended toâ€¦to \_do\_ that!"

"Oh." She seemed disappointed now, and I felt bad. But how was I to know that this was what she'd intended? Her letter sounded so platonicâ€¦ "Well, then why did you answer my letter?" she demanded, as if reading my thoughts.

"I answered your letter to be friendly! I like talking with people when they want to meet me â€" I'm not afraid to take time out of my day to talk to the people I lead!"

"I was telling you I liked you!" She sounded frustrated and close to tears now, but I was so angry that I didn't even care.

"Where in the letter do you say that you like me?"

"Well, I didn't want to come right out and say it! Gods, you do have the hottest package ever, I didn't expect it to be \_empty\_!"

I couldn't think of a good retort, and she sounded so upset now that my hard shell of anger started to break. Maybe I was being unfair about this. I took the deepest breath I could, to calm and steady myself, and then I tried again. "Alva, look. If you felt that way about me, I wish you would have just come right out and told me. In case you haven't noticed, letters sound a lot different than spoken words! I didn't know how you sounded, I didn't realizeâ€¦" I trailed off, kind of patting her shoulder consolingly in the darkness. "I'm sorry I misunderstood you. Look, if you want to hang out, I'm happy to do that, too. But the thing is, I don't want to kiss you. I'm happy to spend time with you as my friend, butâ€¦butâ€¦I don't want to date you. Or anyone," I added quickly, to spare her feelings.

"No, no, just go, Hiccup," she said dramatically.

So maybe it was insensitive, but I seized my chance and I flew out of there.

\* \* \*

><p>"Fun night, huh?" Stoick looked me up and down when I came in the door, still sitting up at the table.<p>

"What are you doing up?" I grumbled, still in an unfriendly mood due to the cruddy night and misunderstanding. "Shouldn't you beâ€" I stopped myself in the middle of my sentence, hearing his words for the first time. "You jerk! Youâ€|you! You're unbelievable!"

"I have no idea what you're talking about."

"You knew what Alva wanted! You knew, andâ€|and you didn't even warn me!"

"Oh, I tried, Hiccup." But he sounded so amused, and he was grinning so widely that I wouldn't have believed him if I hadn't remembered him trying to stop me from leaving. "It was just, you were so determined to believe that it wasn't a trap, oh, noâ€|"

"You jerk!" I repeated, feeling cheated, used and laughed at, all in one night. "You complete jerk! Why didn't youâ€|why didâ€|I can't believe this!"

"So, I read the other letters as well," he said, still grinning. "Quite the heartthrob now, aren't you?"

"You jerk!"

## 119. Vikings Don't Part VII

Untold

### Chapter 119 - Vikings Don't Part VII

Summary: Continuation to 'Vikings Don't'.

\*\*A/N: Well, I am back. I meant to do something from that list of one-shots that I asked you guys to pick from - and I did write one of them, don't misunderstand - but something about it felt off. It just didn't feel like I'd given it my all, coupled with the fact that it was a stupid idea to begin with and I think that was the real problem. Something about the whole thing just felt vaguely dumb and stupid and all that stuff, so I decided to just pick a different thing from the list, and this was on there. So, to whoever chose #15, I think it was, I'm sorry, but #15 was really dumb, so I picked #2 instead. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>7. Vikings Don't Get Allergies<strong>

I actually would have liked springtime, if not for this. I rubbed at my bright red nose, hoping to stifle another sneeze before it came, surprised to see, that when Halfdan and his group walked by, he and Tessa actually broke away from it for a second to join me. Of course

the others stopped for them, watching eagerly. Their favorite activity was finding some kid minding his own business and start picking on him, and as I was the only kid on the island who minded his own business, I tended to be their target more often than not. I scowled at them, crossing my arms over my chest as if I thought it could protect me from whatever demeaning words they were preparing to throw my way today.

"Hiccup," Halfdan seemed genuinely surprised when he came up to me, though, and I wondered if maybe he hadn't noticed me feeling miserable and just decided to make it worse. But then, what had he come over for? To say hi, or invite me for tea, or something?

"You're not getting sick, are you?" He didn't sound concerned or anything; nor did he sound delighted by this development, which he should have. If he thought I was getting sick, he could start showing off way more than he normally did, and flaunt his enormously better Viking skills at my dad, so Dad would yell at me to give me an even worse headache than the one I'd already have from my illness.

I shook my head, deciding to answer his question instead of letting him think what he might. He was being fairly polite, after all, and there was no reason I couldn't do anything he couldn't do. Besides, you know, lifting weapons and getting dates, I thought to myself. "No," I sniffled a little, willing my voice not to sound cloggy. "It's just allergies."

He raised his eyebrows coolly, and Tessa gave a sharp, short laugh that grated on my nerves like a newly sharpened knife.

"Vikings don't get \_allergies\_, Hiccup! I thought we'd seen the worst when we found out you were left-handed but this!"

I stepped back a little, feeling my fists beginning to tighten and clench. I hated the tiny spasm of hurt in my chest, that small part of me that still longed for acceptance from my tribe, regardless of how unlikely that was of happening.

"Wow, Hiccup, you loser," he sneered. "Every time I talk to you, you're just getting worse. Personally, I'm just praying to Thor that you never become our chief €" or that you do something useful for once, like get yourself impaled while in the forge. That'd be doing everyone a favor."

\* \* \*

><p>"Ah-<em>choo!" <em>

I wiped my runny nose on my sleeve, rubbing at my watering eyes, trying to cover my mouth as well as I could, just in case I sneezed again. It wouldn't be surprising, considering I'd been carrying on like this for the past hour.

I heard Gobber make a small noise behind me, and when I turned to look at him, I was surprised to see concern on his face, pulling his lips into a frown. "Lad, are you sure you're not coming down with something? If you need to be sent home early today, there's no shame in that."

I scowled at him, gritting my teeth against a sarcastic response. Really, he was only trying to help me. "I said I'm fine, Gobber. It's just this time of year is all, I'll be fine in a couple days."

"Time of year?" Gobber frowned at my choice of words, and I inwardly winced. "What does the time of year have to do withâ€"?"

I interrupted him for another sneeze, and when I looked back at him, he was wearing an expression of dawning comprehension.

"You have allergies?" He raised an eyebrow as he turned to go back to his work, evidently thinking he had solved the mystery.

"No." My voice was much sharper than I'd intended. "Gobber, I'm a Viking. Vikings don't get allergies."

The look he shot me was something akin to disbelief, with a more sarcastic touch to it.

"What?" I glared at him, picking up my tools and returning to my work. "I justâ€|happen to get like this when spring comes around. It's no big deal. And it's not allergies."

## 120. Witness Part 5

Untold

### Chapter 120 - Witness Part 5

Summary: Continuation to 'Witness'.

**\*\*A/N:** Sleepy babies. That's what I was in the mood for, so that's what you get. Good day to you. Review? :3 sorry for my absenceeee and sorry for not writing a one shot from the list or fulfilling a request. I do what I WANT. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>From then on, I hardly ever saw Hiccup interacting with anyone on Outcast Island. The only person I heard him speaking to was Toothless, and occasionally Ketil the blacksmith or the old man Gust, who had tried to comfort him on the docks. He only spoke to Ketil when he ducked into the forge, and even then, it was only to ask him where certain tools were. I was starting to see exactly when and how Hiccup had developed his love for solitude, and his reluctance to speak too much around other people. He stayed shut up in the forge nearly every hour of the day, when he wasn't romping about with Toothless in the cove.<p>

I had always admired Gobber's ability to make weapons and bracelets and things out of nothing but scrap metal, but when Hiccup was working, I couldn't stop staring. He was skilled, even at twelve, and his hands, so small, so quick, fairly flew over each little device that was slowly becoming part of a whole. He stepped back at last one day to examine his work, holding it up to the diagram he had pinned to the wall (the one that mysteriously disappeared whenever Ketil was in the forge with him, but he wasn't there that day, so Hiccup had pretty much taken over the room). He ran his fingers over the wood and metal contraption, and I gasped when I realized it was the

prosthetic tail that his dragon now sported. He had made it when he was twelve? I could barely even understand the mechanics of it now, and Hiccup hadn't even been a teenager when he had made it, based on a diagram?

The whirlwind picked me up again, jerking me out of my thoughts, and I was standing with Hiccup and Toothless in the cove while the boy buckled the prosthetic tail on, letting Toothless get a bit of feel for it. He examined it, tugging it out a little. "I don't know, bud," he mused thoughtfully, extending it a little farther. "It still doesn't look right. Maybe I should take it back and redo it and€"Toothless? TOOTHLESS!" This last part was a rather high-pitched shriek, as the dragon, overjoyed at being reunited with his tail, attempted to take off, pitching himself into the sky, his wings working at nearly twice the speed they did normally as he fought to keep himself in the air.

"Wait, wait!" Hiccup was screaming, clinging to Toothless' tail so tightly his knuckles had turned white, his freckled face a confusing mishmash of pride and fear. "Toothless, slow down, slow down, or, don't, that's cool, too, really, it is€"ahh, slow down, slow down!" Toothless, we're going to hit the water!" He looked down at the prosthetic tail he had painstakingly crafted, all those long hours in the forge leading up to this. I realized suddenly that this was Hiccup's first flight with him, the first in a string of many that I knew were more relaxed, but no less risky.

He inched slowly downward until he reached the prosthetic fin, wrapping his legs firmly around the flesh part and reaching up his shaking hands to pull it out just before they hit the water, Toothless' dark underbelly skimming it only slightly as they went past. Toothless must have realized what had happened wasn't his doing, because he glanced backward for a minute, catching sight of Hiccup, and swooping suddenly closer to the ground so he flick the boy off his tail without any chance of hurting him.

But as he tried to rise up into the sky again, the tail, as I knew it would, turned sharply inward upon itself, and he fell into the lake with a terrified screech. Hiccup remained on the ground for several long minutes, watching the black dragon struggling to pull himself out of the lake. When Toothless had made it to the bank, he shook himself, getting all the water out of his dripping scales. This seemed to bring Hiccup back to the moment, because he made a noise of protest, covering his face with his arms so he wouldn't get wet. He lowered his arms again when it was over, and, instead of looking annoyed, as he tended to do whenever Toothless performed that, he was grinning so hard I thought it would break off his face completely. "Buddy, do you realize what we just did! You were up in the air! And if you were up in the air then, that means I can get you up in the air again! This. Is. Amazing!" He punched the air with his fist, doing a jig right there on the spot by way of victory dance.

Maybe Toothless was trying to save Hiccup from himself, because he reached out his tail and smacked the boy on the head with the good side.

"Ow!" Hiccup fell onto the ground again, putting a hand on the base of his skull and glaring playfully at the dragon. "You useless reptile, I know you're just as excited as I am."



Somewhere in the distance, a village horn sounded, and the grin disappeared from Hiccup's face as quickly as it had come. All the happiness from ten minutes ago deserted him completely, and he slumped over again, his shoulders drawing up, as if to protect himself from what was to come. I'd never noticed before how relaxed and confident he seemed around Toothless, the ease with which they spoke to each other and touched each other. "I gotta go, buddy," Hiccup said apologetically. "I'm needed in the forge early today, and Dad will \_kill \_me if I'm not there."

At the word 'dad', Toothless lowered his head to the ground, beginning to growl.

"Yeah, I know he's not your favorite person," Hiccup replied, scratching the dragon under the chin and rolling his eyes. "But if it makes you feel any better, he's certainly not mine, either. I gotta get to work, but I'll be back soon. We'll keep testing out the tail, we'll make adjustments as needed, okay, buddy?"

Toothless raised his head again, making a small noise in the back of his throat, perking his ears up questioningly.

I didn't know what he said, but obviously Hiccup did, because his face softened and he leaned down to kiss the dragon on the nose, a smile forming on his features again. "I love you, Toothless."

The two stood there for a second, heads together, smiles mirroring each other, and then Hiccup finally broke contact. "I'll be back soon, Toothless."

With that, he exited the cove, beginning his workday.

\* \* \*

><p>It was sunset now, a brisk wind blowing, but it was clearly still the same day. The only changes were the pink tinges lightly coloring the cove, making the lake sparkle, and the fact that the dragon was positively bouncing up and down when the boy returned to the cove, carrying a bucket of fish, a few tools from the forge, and mismatched bits of leather.<p>

Hiccup set the bucket of fish down and flopped against Toothless' side with a huge yawn as the dragon interested himself in the food, and the boy pulled out the tools from the forge and also produced a needle, beginning to sew a few of the mismatched bits together. When Toothless had finished the fish, the dragon turned to look at Hiccup, who was beginning to yawn frequently, barely keeping his eyes on his work.

Toothless made a noise of affectionate disapproval, a soft dragon tsk, and curled his tail around the boy, scooting him closer and beginning to nuzzle the boy's hair with his nose. Hiccup's eyes fluttered as he attempted to push the dragon away. "T-toothless," he said around a badly concealed yawn, "st-stop, I don't needâ€|I need to work on this. You want to fly again, don't you?"

The look on Toothless' face was so deadpan it reminded me forcibly of my son, sitting beside him.

"Well, I'll be fine. Just let me workâ€"Toothless!" Hiccup tried to

scold the dragon again as he began nuzzling his hair, trying to lull him to sleep. "T-toothless, forget it! I gotta work on yourâ€|T-toothlessâ€|stopâ€|you'reâ€|you'reâ€|doing this onâ€|on purposeâ€|not fairâ€|" The needle and rolls of leather fell out of his hand onto the ground and he relaxed against the dragon's side, his eyelids fluttering. "Vikings don't need restâ€|" he protested sleepily. He was as stubborn at twelve as he was at sixteen. "I'llâ€|I'll sleep later, I can't sleepâ€|hereâ€|" But it was no use. Within seconds, he was taking deep, exhausted breaths, his face only briefly illuminated in the final rays of the dying sun.

## 121. Staring

Untold

### Chapter 121 - Staring

Summary: Gobber apologizes for his judgment.

\*\*A/N: Ackkk, keyboard, why do you do this to meeee D: my N key sucks right now. As does my space bar, and my V key and basically everything else. It started out with the G key just being a little sticky and now it's everything? Every single freaking key, ugh. I thought I knew how to fix it. Guess what, I didn't. And my fingers are sore from typing. So I guess I'd better sign off? Goodbye. Good day. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Honestly, I didn't mind it when people looked. It was the staring I hated. People, they looked at me, and they whispered behind their hands, and they greedily drank in the sight of my numberless scars, or scoffed silently when I tripped, however slightly, over my leg. Or they stared because they still hadn't gotten used to a dragon on Berk, walking among them as casually as if he were one of their own. Thor knew that many still didn't see him â€" or me â€" that way. In fact, almost the instant I had left the house this morning, heads had turned in my direction, and malevolent glares were my only companions as I stumbled and winced my way into the forge.<p>

And Gobber, the first person to ever be nice to me on this island, was looking at me too, looking at me almost in accusation, his thick brows drawn down low upon his forehead as he stared openly. I tried to tell myself that he wasn't like that. That he was the only person in the hundreds of others, that wouldn't care. Maybe he was looking at me for an entirely different reason. Maybe he was looking in concern. It was my first day back at the forge after losing my leg and all. It was practically like pulling teeth to get even this small freedom, but in the end, Stoick let me have it.

Still, in my experience, staring never meant concern. It meant people whispering in hushed voices about the reject, the freak, the Outcast, the hiccup who never quite fit in anywhere. It was people sneaking peeks at the new scar Alvin had left, wondering to themselves how it had happened, making up their own wild theories, but never slowing down or taking time to ask. Staring meant \_judging\_.

Gobber was judging me, too. Would he even let me keep working in the forge, or kick me out now because I was a dirty Outcast, unworthy to

even touch his things or enter his forge, his pride and joy? The idea made me feel scared and too warm, so I kept my eyes fixed on the axe I was sharpening, because he couldn't make me talk if I just pretended not to notice, right? I watched the sparks flying off the grindstone, my stomach churning as I heard him clear his throat. Here it was, the verdict. He was getting ready to deliver it, and it wasn't going to be the one I wanted.

"Hiccup." His voice was soft. I squeezed my eyes shut as I finished sharpening the axe, limping over to the table where we set the newly repaired ones. "I want to talk to you," he continued determinedly, because to Gobber, it really didn't matter whether you were willing to talk or not. I inhaled deeply through the nose, allowing the scent to wash over me, the smell of smoke and ash and wood. I didn't want to leave this place.

"Okay." At least I was prepared for rejection this time. Those first few times I stepped out of Stoick's house—what was I thinking? That I'd come riding back to Berk and everybody would just magically forgive me because I'd tried to come to their aid? Whatever I'd thought, I'd been wrong. Their stares and whispers, whispers about how I was an Outcast and I wasn't to be trusted, and I should just get off the island right now—their stares and whispers proved that. And I hadn't been prepared for it, I actually hoped they would accept me. At least I knew now that Gobber wouldn't. I braced myself.

"I want to apologize."

My eyes flew open. So he was starting off—with an apology for kicking me out? Was that it? I didn't want him feeling guilty. I would kick myself out, too, if I were him. "No, Gobber, it's okay, you don't owe me an apology, I—I completely understand, and it's okay"

"Lad, I do." Gobber rested his hand on my shoulder, and I jumped slightly in surprise, twisting to look at him, struggling to keep my emotions in check. "I owe you an apology for"

"Gobber, it's okay," I interrupted, trying to get out of his grip because if there was one thing I couldn't stand, it was people being nice to me right before they hurt me. A smack on the face, a blow, I could handle. I couldn't take it when people were kind. I swallowed. "It really is."

"But it's not, lad, and let me get this out," he held up a hand to silence me, so I just stood there, prepared to nod along and already coaching myself to show no emotion. I didn't want to make him feel any worse by doing something really melodramatic, like bursting into tears on the spot. It was just—he had seemed so nice, even after he'd found out

"The night we found out, I did something unforgivable to you."

Oh. His words hit me like a ton of bricks, and I suddenly shrank away from him, my eyes stinging with fresh tears. He wanted to talk about that night first? No, I—I couldn't. It was going to be hard enough to have to tell myself every day that now he didn't care, too, along with everyone else on the island, but I—I couldn't. I just couldn't think about the night they'd found out I was an Outcast, not without crying, and I'd already told myself I wouldn't cry when he

said the words. I clenched my hands into fists, and I worked to keep my voice pleasant but still hard, to let him know I didn't want to talk. "You didn't do anything, Gobber."

"I did, though." His prosthetic leg scraped against the wooden floor as he took a step closer to me, and I winced at the sound it made. It was the same sound I heard every morning these days. "I should have stood up for you, but I didn't."

I waited for him to continue.

"I should have stood up for you," he went on, "and stopped things. I should have stopped Stoick before it went too far." His eyes softened. "But I stood there. I turned my back on you, Hiccup, and I shouldn't have done that. It makes me no better than anyone else who's mistreated you."

"It wasn't your fault." I was backing away from him now, wiping at my eyes as quickly as I could, and I hoped he wouldn't see the tears beginning to gather. "It's okay, just get on with it."

"It's not okay," he continued fiercely, glaring at me a little now. My retreat increased in speed, as I became suddenly afraid that he wouldâ€|what? Hit me? No, that wasn't Gobber's style. I wasn't afraid of Gobber in the physical sense of what he could do to me â€" though he talked of killing dragons and attacked other tribes with uncontrolled ferocity, I had seen how kind he could be, and I staunchly believed he would never, ever hurt me.

"It's not okay, Hiccup," he repeated, glare softening. "It's not okay, and I don't think it ever will be. I hurt you. I'm sorry." But he didn't beg for forgiveness, the way Stoick had; he honestly just wanted to lay his wrongdoings out on the table. He wasn't interested in gaining forgiveness. All he wanted was for me to know he was sorry.

"Isâ€|is that all?" Why wasn't he telling me, 'I'm sorry, but you're Outcast scum, and I don't want you in my shop anymore'? Why wasn't he telling me that?

He looked surprised, but nodded. It was almost too good to be true, and I swallowed, holding my breath. Surely he would realizeâ€| "You're not kicking me out?" My voice sounded so small, and I couldn't quite look at him â€" I just kept gazing at the floor.

"Oh, Hiccup, you're an idiot." His tone was affectionate, and I hesitantly looked up at him, feeling my eyes beginning to grow wet again. "I mean, for the love of Thor, do you want me to spell it out for you?"

I felt myself flush, and I gave my eyes one last quick swipe before attempting to speak. "Wellâ€|it's justâ€|everybody elseâ€"

"Everybody else is an even bigger idiot than you are," he told me, patting me a little roughly on the back.

"Butâ€|but theyâ€"

"They don't matter, Hiccup. If they can't accept you at your worst,

why are you giving them your best?"

I looked down at my boots for a minute, turning his words over in my mind. "I justâ€¦I didn't thinkâ€¦the way they looked at meâ€¦it was like I was trash." Even I could hear the vulnerability and hurt in my voice, but I didn't try to disguise it, because in the here and now, being strong didn't matter quite so much. "Sometimes I feel like I am."

Gobber's hands were strong when they found my arms, steadying me, forcing me to look up and meet his gaze. "Hush up. You shut up right now." I guess I may have looked surprised, maybe even hurt, because he added, "I don't let people talk bad about my friends, and right now that's what you're doing. I don't want to hear it. You're gonna stop talking like that. Alright? You're not trash."

I couldn't think of anything to say to that; I just turned away from him, back to the pile of weapons that needed fixing, running a finger over a spearhead that made blood drip from my finger. I wiped it off on my tunic, where it faded into another bloodstain. Another in a sea of many. Toothless had accepted me once, no matter what I was to him. Was it possible that Gobber was willing to do the same?

"Oh, now look at you," Gobber grabbed a bandage off one of the shelves, wrapping it around my finger. "Trying to skip out of work, I suppose? A bleeding finger doesn't get you far in my field, boy â€" try something a little larger scale." He tapped his prosthetic leg against the floor for emphasis, winking at me to indicate he was only playing around.

I smiled gratefully at him. "Oh, yeah, that's what I was doing. Totally. But I'll file that information away for a later date â€" maybe next time I should go for an arm?"

"If you do, Stoick will never let you do anything."

"Ah. Didn't think of that."

"Course not. I'm the brains of this operation."

"Yeahhhh, sure."

## 122. Witness Part 6

Untold

Chapter 122 - Witness Part 6

Summary: Continuation to 'Witness'.

\*\*A/N: Um, fluff? Sort of angsty, too, but also very fluffy. I like it. What do you guys think? \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>When the screaming whirlwind set me down again, it was morning in the cove, sunlight filtering through leafy branches and bouncing off the lake as birds twittered in the trees, beginning their morning song. The place was even more beautiful in the morning than it had

been at night, but I focused my attention on Hiccup the instant he came into view again. I didn't have time for beauty. I had been taken here to watch his memories.<p>

And, silly as I knew it was, underneath all of the emotions â€" rage toward Alvin, for hurting my son this way, frustration for being unable to fix anything, a deep-seated sadness for my son â€" I couldn't help but feel a little hurt, too. Why had Hiccup never told me any of this? Did he not trust me enough? Did he think I wouldn't believe him, wouldn't accept him? Or did he just not think about it?

I desperately hoped it was the latter. The idea of my son keeping quiet out of fear that I would reject him was too much to bear, on top of everything else.

The boy was completely wrapped in the dragon's wings, but the pair of them awoke with a start when the birds started up their racket. Hiccup continued to lay there for almost a full minute, just stroking Toothless' head and smiling absently, staring up at the sky. He snuggled a little closer to the Night Fury before his eyes widened and he sat up, pushing Toothless away. "Oh, no! What time is it, bud?"

The dragon looked a little put out by the rapid change in his friend, but he merely shrugged his scaly shoulders, like, \_how should I know? \_His body language was sometimes so human that it surprised me. It was no wonder Hiccup saw him as more of a human than an animal.

"It's late, it's late, it's late," Hiccup was actually wringing his hands in obvious distress as he ran around the cove. "I'm gonna be late, Toothless, I'm gonna be late for work, and then Ketil's gonna tell Dad, and Dad'sâ€"|" he broke off here, pausing for a minute before evidently deciding that whatever Alvin did would be too horrible to speak of, because he shook it off. He threw Toothless a withering look. "Useless reptile! Why did you let me sleep?"

Toothless said something to him in his curious dragon language, and Hiccup popped him on the head as casually as if the other couldn't incinerate him. "Yeah, yeah, I know," the boy replied, obviously irritated. "But you've got to stop doing this, bud! Halfdan's started asking me where I go all the time, why I'm spending so much time in the forest, if anybody's noticed I'm gone, I'm gonna be dead. No, scratch that, we'll both be dead! Useless reptile!" He was too far gone to notice the look of growing annoyance on Toothless' face; he was busy pacing the cove, shoving everything he could out of the dragon's way so the Night Fury could move around.

"We might not even get to fly today because I'll be so busy! Ketil's been talking to me all week about how he needs all hands on deck and what do I go and do? I go andâ€"ahh! Toothless!"

The dragon had apparently gotten tired of listening to this rant, because he jerked the boy up by his ankle with his tail, holding him upside down in the air.

"You couldn't have gotten my attention some other way, right?" The boy threw his hands up â€" or down? â€" in exasperation. "I don't

have time for this. I really don't. I have to get to the forge. Put me down." The authority with which he spoke would never cease to amaze me. Hiccup, who stuttered when he spoke to adults and avoided locking eyes with the kids his age, who went bright red when addressed by Viking chieftains, spoke to his dragon with no hesitancy in his voice.

The Night Fury reluctantly complied, but he gave a little growl.

Hiccup hauled himself up on the boulders, releasing a small sigh as his annoyance wore away. Underneath his joking demeanor with his dragon, he was clearly exhausted and upset, but he forced himself out of the cove and onward to the village. His final backward glance at the forest was full of longing, but he tore his eyes away.

"Hiccup."

The boy stopped in the middle of the busy street, and several Vikings had to swerve suddenly so they wouldn't hit him. One man didn't even care; he slammed into the boy with obvious force and kept right on walking, and my son tumbled to the ground, glaring darkly after him. "An excuse me would have been nice," he muttered resentfully, before spotting Halfdan standing between two buildings, the only one who could have called him.

Hiccup looked confused, but he jogged over to the older boy, sweeping his messy hair out of his eyes, plucking a stray twig and leaf out of it on the way. In contrast, Halfdan's dark hair and chainmail armor were pristine.

"Halfdan?" The younger boy sounded confused as he addressed the other. "What do you want me for?"

The other Viking didn't wait to start in "almost the instant Hiccup was finished speaking, he had taken over. "I want to know what's going on."

"What'sâ€¦what's going on?" Hiccup repeated, blinking in surprise. Had I not seen his fists clench ever so slightly, I would have truly believed him clueless. He was a good liar. "Um, currently, I'm going to the forge. Why do you care?"

Halfdan's eyes narrowed, and he leaned closer to Hiccup, forcing the younger boy to back away until he hit the side of the building behind him. "You do know you're an hour late into work? Didn't Ketil tell you that you had to be there on time this week?"

"Halfdan, I don't think you understand how the forge works." Hiccup's voice was tactful, but I could tell Halfdan didn't like what he was hearing. His eyes kept getting narrower and meaner the longer Hiccup talked. "I'm not an hour late " I'm ten minutes late." He gave the other boy a very odd look. "Someone must have given you the wrong opening times, because it starts fifty minutes later than when you're thinking."

The older boy seethed. "Ketil told me himself!"

"You know, he might have been kidding with you," Hiccup told him. "He

does that to me a lot."

"Ketil doesn't kid with me." Halfdan's face was stony. "Nobody kids me."

"Obviously, someone did, if you heard the wrong times. Or maybe you heard it through a grapevine?"

The expression on the older boy's face was nothing short of murderous, and in one swift move, he had Hiccup pinned to the side of the building, his hands shaking with his apparent rage. "Look, you little accident, I know what I heard!"

"Okay!" Hiccup's voice was a pained squeak. "So maybe you heard fifty minutes, but from what I heard, it started ten minutes ago! You're making kind of a big deal out of this, are you?"

"What are you hiding?"

"Nothingâ€|?" Hiccup's eyebrows flew up. "Please don't tell Dad I overslept?"

"What are you doing in the forest all the time?" The older boy spoke in a rough, harsh voice.

"Uh, mostly taking walks and drawing." Hiccup's voice, even high and breathless, sounded completely truthful. "I fail to see what my time there has to do with my lateness at the forge, butâ€"

"Don't play dumb with me! You're acting weird lately, you're always sneaking around, avoiding your dadâ€"

"Who wouldn't want to avoid my dad?"

Halfdan let Hiccup slide down the wall. "Fair point," he conceded.

Hiccup dusted himself off. "Look, it's been wonderful catching up, but I do need to get to the forge, so we'll really have to carry on this conversation another time, eh?"

My son could move faster than I thought, as one second he was bidding Halfdan goodbye and the next he was out of that space, pelting down the street as fast as his legs could carry him. He burst into the forge with a sweaty face, stifling a gasp when he noticed Ketil standing at one of the work desks.

"H-hi." His voice was strangled.

"You're an hour late."

"Iâ€|I know, I justâ€|Halfdanâ€|"

The blacksmith threw him a look that was plainly telling him his jumping off a cliff would be preferable to the conversation.

"S-sorry."

\* \* \*



><p>"I'm fine, Toothless." He didn't sound, or look, fine, when the darkened cove came into view, and my son along with it. He looked tired and stressed. "It's just Halfdan, I guess."<p>

At the sound of the name, the dragon was all business, growling, his ears perked up for any sound from outside their little sanctuary. Not for the first time, I wished I could have been there for Hiccup, even if I couldn't have taken him away from this.

"No, I don't think he followed me. If he did, I definitely lost him somewhere in that field of dragon nip, you know the oneâ€"hey, why don't we go there, huh, Toothless?" He scratched the Night Fury behind the ears, and though Toothless definitely perked up at the mention of dragon nip, he immediately looked worried again, his green eyes fixed on Hiccup.

The boy sank down on the grass tiredly. "Okay, you caught me, yes, I'm trying to protect myself from you and your concerned dramatics."

The dragon looked extremely affronted, and within seconds, had pounced on top of the boy to pin him to the ground for the comment he'd made. This drew a laugh, and Toothless was clearly relieved to hear his rider making such a happy noise again. He licked him on the cheek and nuzzled him a few times, drawing half-hearted yet amused protests, until there came another laugh, much higher than the last. I recognized it as Hiccup's genuine one. The dragon made a confused noise in the back of his throat, cocking his head curiously at his rider.

Hiccup hastened to explain, having understood as usual. "It's nothing, Toothless â€" you just accidentally touched my stomach, I guess, when youâ€"T-toothless! No, thatâ€"that wasn't an invitâ€"invitation!" He collapsed, shaking with laughter on the grass as the dragon began tickling his stomach. He tried in vain to push the creature away a couple times, failed miserably, and eventually managed to shout out the word 'please', which was obviously Toothless' cue to stop.

When he drew away, leaping lightly off so the boy could stand, and I saw Toothless' actions had improved his rider's feelings enormously â€" Hiccup was smiling widely, and he bent down to hug the dragon, wrapping his arms around the thick, scaly neck. "Yeah, I love you, too, buddy." He sighed, leaning against the creature, a faint smile still on his face. "But I can't sleep here. Dad didn't notice last night, but Halfdan did."

The Night Fury blew out a disappointed breath, but seemed to realize this was for the best. Hiccup cracked a small smile. "Well, I can't sleep here â€" but if you're not tiredâ€"|" he held up his newest saddle prototype hopefully, and within seconds, they were soaring among the stars.

123. Anymore

Untold

Chapter 123 - Anymore

Summary: I don't think Daddy wants me anymore.

\*\*A/N: Hi. This is...my newest one-shot? It's sad. It's set in that time frame when Hiccup is still on Outcast Island. He's about twelve or thirteen here. I don't know how old he is. I know his angst is delicious, though, so I better drink it up. I think I might try to write again tonight - maybe Hard Knocks or Where Will You Go or Wolfsbane or one of the ones I haven't yet posted, because they're too dumb. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I'm so hungry. I'm so hungry that my stomach lurches whenever I smell food. I'm so hungry I would eat anything that comes my way. I wouldn't even care if it was poisoned. I'm so hungry. Bright spots keep appearing in my vision, orange and yellow and red, like the flickering flame of a lit torch, except there is no one down here. I know that with a crushing certainty, because all night I have lain awake, shivering on the freezing cold stone floor. I keep expecting them to come for me. Maybe they're waiting for me to fall asleep. They like to do that, you know. Come in when I've finally fallen asleep, mess with me a little, then wait for his orders.<p>

I'm so hungry, and I'm so cold, and now I can barely see. There's really not much to see in such a dark cell, except those bright spots, flickering in and out, in and out, fading away faster than my hope. I have no hope left at all at this point. My fragile grip on the world around me is beginning to slip, and suddenly I'm scared that if I close my eyes, I'll never open them again. I don't want to close my eyes and never wake up. I don't want to die here, in an Outcast cell, a nameless prisoner. If I die here, I'll go to Hel, where I will forever wander, searching for peace and safety. I know now that I will never find peace. I do not deserve peace. People like me do not deserve peace.

I lock one arm around my stomach, listening to the constant growling, begging for food that I cannot give it. I grit my teeth, lowering my head. I don't think Dad is coming for me.

I don't think Daddy wants me anymore. I don't think he ever did.

## 124. Caffeine and the Grace of Thor Almighty

Untold

### Chapter 124 - Caffeine and the Grace of Thor Almighty

Summary: How is Hiccup still \_upright?\_

\*\*A/N: Well, this isss my newest chapter :D yes, yes. It was an old thing I'd written a few months back and I found it again and I was like heyyy it's Father's Day in a few days...so this is my main contribution. But I will be posting something for Father's Day as well. Something that features more Hiccup/Stoick\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Coffee was truly a beverage of the gods, I thought to myself, yanking my mug up and taking a hasty sip. The bitter taste flooded my tongue, and a bit of the black liquid splashed up, burning my lip. I wiped my mouth with my sleeve, turning back to my work. If only it would quit blurring in front of my eyes, I could be done with this a lot fasterâ€|the coffee should at least give me a little bit of energy back, enough to finish this piece before nightfall.<p>

"Lad?" Gobber shimmied his way into the backroom, letting the tattered red curtain fall loosely behind him, fluttering in the recent breeze. "Lad, I need â€" Hiccup, how long have you been working on that?"

The use of my real name, coupled with the tone of concern, was enough to make me glance up from my work, but only for a moment. I shrugged. "Three nights. And fourteen cups of coffee." I held the mug up to show the truth in my statement. Toothless made a noise of displeasure in the back of his throat, but I ignored him.

Gobber gave a squawk. "Three nights? Lad!" He rushed over to me, knocking over nearly a hundred things in his haste, and putting gentle hands on my shoulders. "How have youâ€|howâ€|how did you manage to avoid Stoick?" He sounded both concerned and slightly impressed.

"He's b-busy with the pr-prepâ€|prepâ€|" I cut myself off with a yawn, holding a hand over my mouth, and then rubbing my forehead. I stayed like that for a second, my head suddenly pounding. What had Iâ€|? "What was I saying?"

The concern on his face now outweighed any awe, and I'm sure he would have given a gross overreaction, as people on Berk tended to, but at that moment, the sound of the forge door opening cut through anything he had been planning to say, and a voice started calling for him.

I took another sip of my coffee, turning back to my work. I didn't have time for this if I was going to finish this by nightfall.

Gobber threw me a glance. "Stay put." He went to go back into the main room of the forge, but then thought better of it, and to let me know the conversation wasn't over, I guess, added, "There. You know what I mean." He then charged off into the main room, and I heard him conversing in a low murmur with somebody I recognized, but I couldn't quite place their voice.

Well, whatever. I needed to finish my work, anyway. I turned back to do just that, but then the curtain parted again, admitting not Gobber this time but Snotlout and Fishlegs, the former of whom was carrying a broken spear. "Hey, Hiccup, do you want to comeâ€|how long have you been awake?" Snotlout rushed over to me, as Gobber had done, taking my hand away from my face. When had I put it there?

"Umâ€|"

"Three nights, fourteen cups of coffee, and counting," Gobber said, entering the backroom with us.

"How is he still standing?" My cousin gasped to Gobber, like he thought I couldn't hear him or something.

"He won't be for long," the blacksmith declared grimly. As if to prove the point, he came over to me and took my arm. "C'mon, Hiccup, you need sleep."

Toothless nodded to try and reinforce this fact, and I found I had no energy left to fight them, allowing Gobber to push me into the wooden chair.

"N-no, I don't. I'll work sitting down, if you like, but I do need to work." I folded my arms.

"What, exactly, is so important about finishingâ€|uhh, what is this?"

"Put it down!" I leapt from the chair, eager to get it out of Snotlout's hands, but I almost immediately sank back into the chair, as I'd started staggering. Gobber must have grabbed me, I thought. "It'sâ€|it'sâ€|" I yawned. "Don'tâ€|don't touch it. The calibration is very sensitive, andâ€|andâ€|whatâ€|what was I saying?"

The three exchanged glances, like they were both slightly in awe of my ability to function, and very concerned for this fact as well.

Gobber finally looked to me, his eyes expressingâ€|pity? Was that what it was? He was so hard to read sometimes. It was annoying. "Hiccupâ€|"

I rested my cheek momentarily on my hand. I meant to reply to him, and for a second, I thought I had, but I guess not, because he was still staring at me. Finally, he decided to forge ahead himself without waiting for a response. "Does this have anything to do with the fact that it's Father's Day in a few days or anything? Because, lad, I'm tellin' ya right now, he doesn't celebrate it much anymore, and while he'd probably appreciate somethin' from you, he would not like that you're depriving yourself of sleep to get it finished."

"Iâ€|I only have a few days!" I couldn't seem to keep my eyes open. "Just let me finish, Iâ€"

I heard the creaking of the forge door again, but this time, the voice that reached my ears was one I could place, and I jumped up from my chair again, grabbing the present out of Gobber's hands a little roughly and stowing it beneath the work desk. "That's Stoick! That's Stoick! Keep him away from here, please!" I begged, giving the thing a little kick to keep it out of sight, just in case he did enter here.

"You think I won't?" Gobber gave me an incredulous look. "His precious baby boy has been up three nights in a row, on my watch! He would have my head if he knew!"

I flushed. "I'm notâ€!"

"Save it," Snotlout put a hand over my mouth. "He'll hear you both if you don't stop yelling at the top of your lungs! For Thor's sake, keep it down!"

"I can't believe you went there," I grumbled, but I let it slide, as he did have a point.

Sure enough, the curtain rustled, and Stoick suddenly poked his head in. "What is going on in here?" He demanded, attempting to muscle his way through the doorway, but he couldn't quite manage it.

Now, looking back, with my brain fully functioning again, I know how it must have looked to Stoick. The four of us standing there, me kicking at the desk, blushing furiously, Snotlout with a hand hovering over my mouth, Fishlegs trying to stay out of it, and Gobber glaring at the three of us. I don't presume to know what he was thinking, but I bet it wasn't anything good. But, looking at it with my eyes, it was Stoick gazing at us rather suspiciously, so I did everything I could to bring the attention off myself. "Gobber! It's Gobber! Thought he heard a troll in here, got Snotlout all excitedâ€|"

"Ah, that'sâ€|that's right," Gobber cottoned on quicker than Snotlout did. "But it wasn't a troll, Stoick! You can rest assured that your son is safe! Just an ink bottle that fell."

"Hiccup's been up for three nights," Fishlegs added unhelpfully.

Gobber and I both glared at him.

"What?" Stoick demanded.

"I'm sorry! All the secrecy in this room is nerve-wracking! I thought I'd better let one of the Terrors out of the bag!"

"Secrecy?" Stoick's eyes narrowed, focusing in on our resident weak link. "What secrecy is going on here, Fishlegs?"

"N-nothing!" I stepped in front of him, holding my hands up like a shield. "Really, nothing, it's justâ€|justâ€|"

"Hiccup, how long have you beenâ€|?"

"Upright? Right now, I'm upright by the grace of Thor almighty and caffeine." I held my mug aloft.

Stoick looked aghast. "Why?"

I threw Fishlegs a dark glance over my shoulder. "Because," I began, already working to come up with a good lie. "I realized a way to make Toothless' tail more efficient, and I didn't want to stop to rest until it was done."

There was a long silence in which I really thought Fishlegs was going to crack. He would have, if Stoick hadn't interrupted with his own words. "Alright, then. Snotlout, Astrid's looking for you. Might want to bring your best mace â€" she looked pretty angry. Fishlegs, I want to know what you meant by secrecy." He frowned thunderously. "And Hiccup," he turned to me, and I flinched, expecting a lecture or maybe a blow, but all he said was, "You're going to go home and get some sleep."

"Because you can just \_make\_ me sleep," I huffed, annoyed. "I'll go

to sleep tonight, that's when I was planning to crash."

"No, you'll sleep now," he told me.

"Alright, but can weâ€¦move this conversation elsewhere? Like to the main room, perhaps?"

Stoick gave me an odd look. "Alright?"

## 125. Dragon Academy

Untold

### Chapter 125 - Dragon Academy

Summary: Hiccup wants to educate people about dragons. Based off Riders of Berk episode one, "How to Start a Dragon Academy".

**\*\*A/N:** Sorry for not posting anything on Father's Day. (I'm trash...) This is my newest one-shot, written because I was thinking I'd like to incorporate the Dragon Academy into this AU, and this story seemed like the perfect place for it. Unbreakable doesn't really seem like the time, huh? Anyway, I'm listening to Icon for Hire's "Iodine" while I type this. I'd better get off soon, because my back hurts from being all scrunched up at the computer.\*\*

**\*\*UPDATE:** Thought chapter was shit, ended up taking it down. Have reposted in hopes that it's not. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>It was the little things.<p>

It was the way Toothless' fire glowed blue, and the empty pages in the Book of Dragons and the way the Nadder was the only dragon in the known world that could shoot spikes from the tail. It was the way Hookfang could light himself on fire, but Toothless couldn't; the way Meatlug could hover in midair, but Stormfly couldn't. It was the little things that fascinated me, but there were big things, too.

Above all, it was the pressing desire to know.

Was this truly all there was out there?

I had flown on a Night Fury, trained a Deadly Nadder, whispered back to a Whispering Death, stumbled across packs of Monstrous Nightmares and Terrible Terrors that growled and shrieked until I touched them with a gentle hand. I had once soothed a Nightmare that was wild with grief, listened to terrible tales of Vampire Spydragons murdering their victims in the most gruesome way possible. I had seen Changewings appear, as if from nowhere, clinging to trees and resting on rocks, preparing to defend their territory against me, the curious intruder. I had seen the horrific reality of the dragon queen, the only other creature that had made even Toothless shudder in fear. I had met Scauldrons, played with Seashockers and stood in awe of the might of a Thunderdrum.

The world was full of the creatures, proudly tossing their heads and

preening, breathing fire or blowing smoke rings, spreading great wings as they prepared to soar up into the limitless sky. The Archipelago was full of dragons, beautiful animals that stole my breath in my awe and wonder. I had discovered so many species and wandered so many places in the hopes of finding more, I had flown so many and trained many more, and still I wondered. Were the ones I had found the only ones out there?

This couldn't be all there was. Toothless couldn't be the only Night Fury out there. No, there were more dragons somewhere in this world, and I knew I'd just have to find them. Because if I didn't, I would wonder all my life. Happy as I was on Berk, I still sometimes craved the freedom I'd had when I was first befriending Toothless, training him and learning to ride him. Of course, things had been different then, so different, and they were surely better now, but I missed just being able to take off whenever I wanted to, no need letting other people know where I was going or when I'd be back, especially since half the time I didn't even know myself.

And there were other dragons, too — dragons that the people of Berk had seen that I hadn't, dragons that preferred the icy, frozen islands to the north and creatures that preferred the tropical islands to the south, some that preferred water, some that preferred air — there were just so many out there, and how great would it be if there were people learning about them together, a whole group of us? Whoever was interested could come, and whoever wasn't didn't have to. What if we could write the whole book from scratch, go on scouting expeditions for the different dragons of the world, searching in the sky and in the sea, in remote caves and forests and marshes, finding new creatures everywhere we looked, maybe even one day finding other Night Furies? Toothless could finally have a family again, finally have companions like him, that could fly as fast and shoot as much fire, dragons that matched him in skill and ability. Wouldn't it be amazing if we could find other Night Furies, new dragons, and train them as surely as I had trained Toothless? How great would it be if we could meet up every few days or so, just a group of people who loved dragons, like me, getting together whenever we could to discuss our dragons, talk about new things we'd learned about them, and go as far out to find more? How great would it be if there were people like me on Berk, people who cared about dragons so much that all they wanted was to learn about them? And we could even have a teacher, somebody to keep the meetings on track, make sure we didn't veer off-topic, study the new dragons we found — a teacher who knew his dragons, their eggs and habits and habitats, who could teach the history of the dragons, how they came into being, educate younger Vikings about the war — because they needed to know, too. And what if this teacher was not only willing to do all that, but also willing to teach people, young and old alike, the proper way to ride and train the glorious creatures, study the different types of fire they breathed, proper seating in the saddle? What if there was somebody out there like that, and they were willing to teach classes on dragons, lead expeditions to discover new ones, willing to take time out of his day to privately tutor the Vikings who were scared or uncertain?

— and I guess that's why I'm really telling you this. I mean, there are still some people on Berk that don't know the correct way to calm or touch a dragon, and wouldn't it be great if everyone knew how? What if somebody runs across a wild dragon one day, and they don't know the protocol? And, you know, the other kids, some of them are

still too scared to practice riding if I'm not there with them, and it'd be good if we could get some other people who feel comfortable in the air, like I do, so we could go on patrol and stuff, keep a watch for enemy ships in our waters, stuff like that. And of course, there are still some people who think dragons can't really be trained, that I'm just crazy, so these meetings would really open a lot of eyesâ€|"

"I see your point," Stoick admitted, nodding slightly. "It's a good idea."

"Really?" My heart lifted at the good reception I was getting.

"Yes, I think if you could find people willing to attend and willing to learnâ€|I think it'd be a good idea. We could try it, at least."

I had told myself that if I got the green light, I would save my celebration for later, but even I couldn't stop the grin breaking out over my face. "Yes!"

"And you'd need to find some place to hold it," he quickly forestalled me before I could get too pleased. "I'm thinking any buildings are out of the question."

I nodded. I was prepared for that. "And I'll still need to find a teacher," I reminded him. "I know it's going to be a lot of responsibility, but I'll handle everything. I promise."

He looked confused for half a second. "Teacher?"

"Well, like I said, we need somebody to teach people how to ride, right? But don't worry, I'll find somebody. I've already got some ideas."

"Ohâ€|okay." He still looked very surprised, but I hardly cared anymore; I had an academy to open.

## 126. Overheard Prayer

Untold

### Chapter 126 - Overheard Prayers

Summary: Stoick hears something he shouldn't.

**\*\*A/N:\*\*** \*\*I feel like an apology is in order, maybe? I mean, I kind of abandoned this fic. So, yeah, apologies definitely in order, I guess...and, um. In my defense, however, September just flew right by. I blinked and it was over. Sorry about that :P Um, let's see...what's been going on in my life lately? Um...nothing. Sorry guys. I'm outta stuff. I'm outta words. \*\*

**\*\*Soooooooo.** A new chapter. Rather angsty, hopefully heartwarming, likely not. :P Anyway, this is set in between To Be Loved the Way You Love Me and Starlight, Star Bright - it's like right after To Be Loved the Way You Love Me, though, like a few days. So Hiccup is like, relearning to walk and whatnot, and still getting accustomed to the 'wow, this man is my real father, wow' and so on. And Stoick is



like secretly tearing his beard out in guilt over branding Hiccup and not being there for him and everything, and just like yeah. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I could not remember a time when I had ever been happier.<p>

For sixteen long, painful years, I had believed my family to be dead. My wife had passed during the birth of our child; and soon after, the midwife pronounced the baby to be a stillborn, and wasted no time in setting him out to sea. I was not even to be allowed to see him, not even allowed to hold the small, still body in my arms before it was placed on a ship and sailed away from me forever.

And then, Hiccup had come crashing into my life.

Literally crashing, considering one of our archers spotted a dragon in the skies and shot at it with an arrow â€" bringing both Hiccup and his Night Fury tumbling down, onto the shores of Berk, where he'd resided with me for the past six months. The moment I'd seen him, his face, freckled and round, like hers, his hair, messy and auburn, like hers, his stature, slight and small, like herâ€" I knew it was too much of a coincidence to be true. Only Gobber knew of my suspicions, and he had jealously guarded them all this time. I hadn't told Hiccup until I'd been certain, until Alvin the Treacherous himself, the man who had kidnapped my boy at birth, after he'd been set out to seaâ€"until he'd revealed the truth to me, I had not breathed a word of my beliefs to Hiccup. It would have been too painful to allow my hopes to rise so â€" I didn't think I would be able to stand it if I was wrong, and he knew it, too.

Now, reviewing this past half a year in my mind brought a smile to my face, but sadness and guilt lurked in the deeper recesses of my recollections, not quite tainting the memories, but weighing on my heart like a basket of stones. If I could go back and erase everything I'd done when I'd discovered Hiccup had been a prisoner on Outcast Islandâ€"well, I was in the wrong. I could see that now.

I could see now that Hiccup had been held captive; it had not been his choice to stay with that vile man for as long as he had.

These were my thoughts, both joyful and painful, as the wooden steps leading up to my boy's new bedroom creaked under my weight. To think that there would now be somebody else living in this house, sleeping in that little room above mine, breathing evenly in and out every night above me, taking meals with me and sitting at my table and wandering down the stairs every morningâ€"well, these were wonderful musings.

I couldn't help but smile to myself as I had them, reaching slowly out to push Hiccup's door openâ€"Gobber said I bordered on the obsessive, with how often I checked on my boy before going to bed myself. I couldn't help it â€" I kept waiting, holding my breath for the other boot to drop and take my child from me once more.

As the door swung slowly open â€" I knew just the way to push it so it wouldn't creak, and wake him if he was asleep â€" I peeked quickly inside, already preparing to withdraw myself again once I had assured myself that he was safe in bed â€" only he wasn't in bed. He was standing by the bed, his back to me, and just as I opened my mouth to

question this, he knelt by the wooden frame " I saw his shoulders move, as if he were fiddling with something " and he cleared his throat, and began to speak.

"Hi. Um, Odin...If you're listening...I kind of wanted to say...sorry? All this time, I've been kind of bemoaning you and everything you throw my way...it kind of feels like everything you do is just to make my life harder...but Gobber said today that little kids are always supposed to say their prayers before bed every night...nobody ever told me to do that, so I guess, I'm trying to make up for lost time now..."

I would have liked to enter then, or walk away, but something kept me rooted to the spot.

"But I don't always listen to what Gobber says anyway, because he keeps telling me trolls exist, and Stoick says they don't...I think Gobber's messing with me. I've never seen one. Anyway...um, if you guys have been keeping an eye on me, then, you know what's happened down here lately. Toothless and I crashlanded on Berk...and we met Gobber...and Stoick...and everything changed." When he spoke the names of me and my friend, I cherished the warmth in which he said them.

"Odin, it's amazing. There are people on Berk who like me! I mean, there are some people who still think I'm a dirty Outcast and I know they're right, and I won't get above myself, I promise, but there are people " like the kids, and Gobber and Stoick " who don't! Isn't that amazing! And...and Stoick..." his voice trailed off. When he picked back up again, I hated the tremulous note " like he was afraid to hope. "I think he likes me."

Liked him. Think. The pain I experienced in that moment was unbearable. Hiccup thought I liked him? How could he not know for certain that I loved him so much it hurt?

"Odin, I've got a father..." The delight in his voice was like a knife to my heart. "I've got a real father. And I swear, I'll be a really good son...a really good one " I'll never complain about him, or disobey him " when I know he's right. And I'll never do something weak, like getting sick or cold, or tired...and if I do, I'll never say a word about it."

I couldn't tell if this hurt me more or less than his previous statements " this belief that he had to change himself to make me proud.

"If Alvin attacks again " what am I saying " when he attacks again, I'll do whatever I can to protect my dad, and the people of Berk. I'll look after him. I'll be a really good son."

These words hurt me, too. How could Hiccup think like this? How could he think that he had to protect me, that he had to do everything perfectly for me to love him?

"I'll do everything," Hiccup continued earnestly. "I'll go work in the forge with Gobber whenever Stoick wants me to, and I'll actually help the village this time, instead of just screwing everything up...I'll do something right, Odin, I swear. And I'll always tell him he's a good dad, I'll never let him think he isn't. I'll help him

whenever he needs it. I'll never, ever be weak or useless again â€" I'll cook every meal if he needs me to, and I'll clean, if that's what he wantsâ€"I'll do whateverâ€"just pleaseâ€"don't take him away from me." When he next spoke, his words were but a quiet whisper in the musty air of the long-unused bedroom, voice trembling noticeably, betraying his fear that this was a request too big to be granted. "Please let Stoick love me." There was such an ache in Hiccup's tone that it hurt to listen.

He didn't speak after this; merely rose from his place by the bedside, leaned over and blew out his candle, plunging the room into darkness before settling down in the bed. I didn't enter the room until long after he had fallen asleep, still frozen in shock and guilt over what I had heard. But when his eyes finally closed and slumber had stolen him away, I crept quietly into the room, watching his shoulders rise and fall with the steady, even pattern of his breathing. And I silently prayed to Odin myself â€" I prayed that he would help me be a good father, good enough for the boy on the bed in front of me.

## 127. The Kind of Silence

### Chapter 127 - The Kind of Silence

Summary: Stoick and Hiccup come home from a trip into the woods.

**\*\*A/N:** This is for RazzlePazzleDooDot, because it's her birthday! She's, like, one of my best friends. She's one of my bestest friends. So, she deserves better than this...what is this? A chapter? It's 300+ words of useless rambling. But anyway, it was this or nothing. So. PLEASE EVERYONE GO TO HER PAGE, RAZZLEPAZZLEDOODOT'S, AND FREAKING READ AND REVIEW HER AU, HAPLESS SITUATIONS BECAUSE IT IS FRICKIN GOLD AND I LOVE IT AND I KNOW WHOEVER ELSE READS IT WILL LOVE IT, TOO xD There, now. I have pleased her and mortified her, as well. All in all, it's a success. **\*\***

**\*\*So.** This is short, sweet, and autumn-y. Hopefully. I needed to write something about the beauty of fall. So here it is. **\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>The path through the woods was a mess of mud and wet leaves, the grass damp from the rain earlier this morning. A cool breeze ghosted across my face, ruffling my hair before shaking a few of the more determined leaves off the branches; they went fluttering off willingly enough, landing in my path. I didn't veer around them; I crunched determinedly through them, listening to the swish and crackle, my boots sending several up in the air, like tiny brown birds. They caught the next gust of wind, fluttering on far ahead of me, out of sight.<p>

When we got back to the village, there would undoubtedly be pumpkins and candy bowls set out on porches, and Ms. Ingerman would invite us in for dinner, because "for Thor's sake, Stoick, you're a chief, you don't have time to be cooking and running the village, now do you?" and "Hiccup, you're too thin!" I smiled at the thought, stopping short of stepping in a mud puddle. This time, I changed direction slightly, pausing again at the sight of the sun sinking slowly behind

the trees, turning the whole sky orange.

"It's nice out here, isn't it?" Stoick ducked under a low-hanging tree branch, bending nearly double just to avoid getting his helmet smacked off; when I walked upright, the limb didn't even brush my head. "A bit quieter than what we're used to back in the village."

"Yeah." I kicked up another pile of leaves, watching them fall into puddles and float on the water for a second. "Good thing you're with me, too, otherwise I'd have gotten myself lost twice over already."

I heard him laugh softly from somewhere above me, but I didn't look up; I avoided another puddle, because the last thing I needed was to get wet " whenever I appeared to be in even the slightest discomfort, Stoick overreacted wildly, and I definitely didn't want him worrying over the possibility that I would catch a cold.

Stoick looped an arm around my shoulders, pulling me closer to him, and we both turned our gazes to the orange sky. Together, we walked back to the village in the kind of silence that didn't need words.

## 128. Maze of Mayhem

### Chapter 128 - Maze of Mayhem

Summary: The twins have some...rather interesting ideas.

**\*\*A/N:** So, first things first...I did this because of Loki's Maze of Mayhem in School of Dragons...anybody on here play that? I used to love that game, but playing on it helped me avoid writing too much, so I eventually had to stop playing it. I recently got back into it, and beat the maze, but I couldn't imagine Ruffnut and Tuffnut actually managing to create the whole thing and make it challenging enough for the average human brain, without outside help; so of course, Hiccup became their partner-in-crime. He was Snotlout's partner last year, so I paired him with the twins this year. After that, I'm going to have to find a new formula xD **\*\***

**\*\*Also,** I know Hiccup running the maze was pretty glossed over, but I figured who wanted to read about him fumbling in the dark by himself for a while? And besides, everyone who has a School of Dragons account knows how evil that maze is. :P **\*shudders\* \*\***

**\*\*Oh,** also, I'm doing Nano Wrimo this year, so this might be the last time I post for awhile. I'll try to update a couple stories during the month of November, but...no promises :P But I WILL try and update Break of Dawn. And Unbreakable. I promise.**\*\***

**\*\*And,** last thing - I am going as a Slytherin Hogwarts student this year! Huh? Huh? Well, it's kind of half-assed. I came up with it like three days before the cutoff, but somehow I managed to gather all the materials. Thank the good Lord in heaven for THAT. **\*\***

**\*\*Happy Halloween!\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>"SHIT!"<p>

"Alert! Alert! Code red! Hiccup has seen! Repeat: Hiccup has seen! Commence complete and utter destruction!"

Before I could stop them â€" what they were yelling about, I had no idea â€" the Zippleback had obediently opened both his mouths. I could see an intense orange glow building up at the back of his throats, preparing to begin blasting the rickety structureâ€"

"Wait, no!" My words came out garbled and frantic as I registered the very real threat of imminent death if that dragon followed through on the twins' orders. "Wait, wait, call him off! We're \_underground\_!"

"Is that a problem?" A mildly surprised Tuffnut asked.

"If he releases that fireball, we're going to be crushed!"

"Alright, alright, we got this," Tuffnut assured me, before turning to the dragon and shouting, in perfect unison with his sister, "BUZZ OFF, YOU STUPID LIZARD!"

There surely must have been a better way to speak to the Zippleback, but for once, a dragon was not my immediate concern. "Whatâ€|are you guys doing down here?" I placed a hand on Toothless' head to quell the slight stirring of fear when I saw the peeling wooden walls surrounding us like a fence. There was nothing to keep me here this time. If the claustrophobic confines got too stifling, I could just fly out, simple as that.

"Ohâ€|nothing."

"Nothing, huh?" I knelt down, examining the wood. "Is there any chance at all that thisâ€" I paused to gesture at the structure surrounding us. "â€"might end up destroying Berk?"

"Of course not," Tuffnut waved a hand dismissively, drawling the words, "we're not looking to destroy Berk this time. We're looking to improve it."

See, the thing was, the twins often had ideas like this â€" ideas that ended bringing the island or its inhabitants to harm. Dad saw it as Astrid, Fishlegs and my unofficial duty to keep them from having these ideas in the first place, or executing them, but even we couldn't control them twenty-four hours a day. Besides that, everyone was caught up in Halloween preparations â€" the twins and their activities had pretty much slipped our minds.

"Improve it?" I repeated skeptically, hoping to get to the bottom of this quickly, so I could report the whole thing to Dad.

"I can't tell you much more, Hiccup. Top secret. We need to continue working. So you need to be off," he gestured at the hole above me, pouring rays of autumn sunlight into the cool, underground space.

It would be so easy to just escape from here and tell Dad and let him handle it. Let him foil the twins' crazy schemes for once. Didn't I get a day off? Ever? A day where I wasn't being chased by Outcasts or

training new dragons or getting brutally attacked or watched or stalked or stealing things or getting myself into trouble or keeping somebody else out of it orâ€¦well. The list went on, but you get the point. I just wanted to spend one day not having to do anything.

But that day clearly was not going to be today. And Dad had enough on his plate already â€” I couldn't bear to add my own shit or the twins' ideas to it, so I just folded my arms across my chest, narrowing my eyes. "Just spill it. It'll go by much easier, and much faster."

They stayed silent.

"I always find out anyway," I pointed out. "So don't waste my time."

"You know," Ruffnut said thoughtfully, "we do need a second opinion."

"But we swore this time, we'd get it past the chief!"

"But Hiccup would be great for the part! He's just the right mix of brave and crazy, like us!"

"What? I'm notâ€”braveâ€¦orâ€¦crazyâ€”well, maybe a little crazy, butâ€”"

"Butâ€¦butâ€¦it's top secret!" Tuffnut protested weakly, and forlornly.

"C'mon! He would make a great test dummy!"

"Wait, wait, test dummy?" I repeated suspiciously.

"No way!" Tuffnut retorted. "He scares way too easy! Snotlout told me all about last Halloween!"

Despite the situation, I found myself trying to salvage my dignity over anything else. "Whatever Snotlout told youâ€”"

"He survived Outcast Island," Ruffnut countered. "He can't possibly scare that easy!"

"Wait a secondâ€”"

"Hey, I didn'tâ€”"

"Hold onâ€”"

"Guysâ€”"

"C'mon, Hiccup would be greatâ€”"

"â€”it doesn't help thatâ€”"

"â€”whatever I sayâ€”"

"â€”you don't understandâ€”"

"â€”it's not likeâ€”"

"â€"c'monâ€"

"â€"noâ€"

"\_Will either of you just sit down and tell me like the two civilized human beings you are, deep, deep down, what is going on here?" \_I guess I felt kind of guilty for shouting at them, but if that was the only way to get them to stop all the damn talking and blink silently at me, as they were now doing, I supposed it was worth it.

They remained like that for another sixty seconds or so, and my patience reached an end. "Well! Don't just stand there gawping like fish! And you can stop all the debating, I'm standing right here, and I have the final say in this business." I crossed my arms again.

"Wellâ€|"

"Umâ€|"

Oddly enough, now neither one seemed to want to look at me.

"We're making a maze," Tuffnut finally blurted out. "It wasâ€|her idea. Yeah! That's it! Hers! All hers! And she talked me into it! It was her all this time, officer! She made me do it! She threatened me! She threatened to destroy my favorite mace! It's my mace, mine! I couldn't let my poor little mace come to harm! I did everything I could to save the defenseless weapon! I'm sorry, Chief!" And then, with a dramatic flair that was actually quite impressive, he threw himself at my feet, sniveling and beginning to grovel. "Please, chief, please!"

"Tuffnut, stop that! I'm not the chief!" I took a step away from him, then turned sharply to face Ruffnut. "Is that true?"

"I didn't threaten him with anythingâ€"

"No, the maze! Is it true that you were down here making a maze?"

She nodded.

"Wellâ€"well, that's okay, then. That's no big deal."

"\_What\_?"

"It'sâ€|just a maze, right? Nothing dangerous?"

"Noâ€|I mean, we scare people, but we're not hurting them."

"Well, for Thor's sake, then, what was all that shouting about? If you guys don't hurt anyoneâ€"

"\_You\_ were the only one shouting," Tuffnut interjected sullenly.

"â€"we're okay."

"So my cover story was for nothing?"

"Tuffnut, your cover story \_sucked\_."

"I don't have to endure this abuse," he huffed.

I rolled my eyes. "Is that what you guys meant then? About test dummy? You guys just want me to run through the maze and give my opinion?"

"Yeahâ€|"

"Alright." I grinned at them, rolling up my sleeves. "Where does it start?"

"What?" They exchanged a glance, like it was really so hard to believe.

"Let me get this straight â€" you want to do this? You want to be our test subject?"

I shrugged, then smiled. "Sure. Why not?"

"Alright, but first," Tuffnut stepped forward. "Hold out your dominant hand and swear by it; repeat after me."

"What?"

"That doesn't sound like repeating!"

"You haven't started yet!"

"Ohâ€|right. Well, anywayâ€|I, Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Thirdâ€|"

"I, Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third," I held out my left hand warily.

"â€|Solemnly swear to pretend it was my own stupid fault if I get hurt in this maze (and the chief should eat that right up, because, like, you're always getting hurtâ€|)â€|"

"Okay, no, I'm done, I'm not finishing that vow," I dropped my hand.

"Well, the only vow we really need is one of secrecy. Just promise us you won't tell anyone about the maze before it's ready, and you're in."

"Now that, I can do." I nodded.

"Oh, and your dragon stays at the entrance."

"Absolutely not." I could just about stomach being below the earth with my dragon at my side, but without him? "He goes where I go."

"Fine." Maybe Tuffnut sensed how stubbornly I was willing to fight on this, because he let the matter drop. "He just can't help you, like, fly out. And he can't help you find a direction in the maze



either."

"Alright." That sounded fair. I followed Tuffnut to the makeshift "entrance", and stood at the ready.

"Hide your eyes."

"N-no!"

"It's for the maze, Hiccup," Ruffnut explained patiently. "We're getting in-character. We wander the maze scaring people, but we have to take position in the maze first. So go on. Hide your eyes. We're not going to do anything to you while your eyes are closed."

It surprised me that Ruffnut, of all people, knew the kind of assurance to give me that made me shut my eyes, but I followed her orders, listening to them rustle around and mumble curse words under their breath.

"Okay, you can start." Ruffnut sounded like she was right next to me, but when I opened my eyes, they were both gone â€" and there was nothing but a dark, twisting tunnel in front of me. I hesitantly took a step forward â€" when that didn't bring the twins upon me at once, grabbing me or anything, I became a bit braver.

Toothless gave a little moan somewhere beside me, and I reached out a hand until my fingers brushed his scales. "Shh, shh. We're okay, bud. It's just Ruffnut and Tuffnut. You like the twins, right?" I put a hand against the wall to hopefully keep me on the correct path, but this plan was ineffectual when I reached a series of tight corners, and I had to take my hand off the wall. Just as I was beginning to get uncomfortable with the cramped space, I came to the final turn in the path, and saw that it opened wider, leading to a doorway with the wooden walls I had seen before.

I started to race ahead â€" this maze was already a lot easier than I'd expected.

"RAH!" Ruffnut suddenly turned the corner at the same time I did, jumping out from behind the rocky wall she'd hidden behind.

"Ruffnut! You scared the hell out of me!"

"That's the point, Dragon Boy," she responded, before gesturing to the next room, with the wooden panels. "Go on."

Not entirely sure I wanted to continue, I started for the next room, watching as Ruffnut resumed her crouched position by the wall, eyes fixed on me as I ducked deeper into the maze. "Tuffnut? Your sister's already gotten me, so Iâ€"ahh!" I let out a sharp kind of yelp as he appeared suddenly beside me, grabbing me by the shoulder before sinking back into the shadows, leaving me to continue navigating alone.

"Well, he certainly has a flair for the dramatics," I said, turning to Toothless. His warble seemed like an agreement, and I smiled, scratching his head before focusing my attention on the maze again. "Right, soâ€"shall we continue?" I gestured to the path ahead of us, taking a step forward and peering around one of the panels. Neither

of the twins were waiting behind this one, so I progressed to the next one, and then the one after that, turning a corner and ready to celebrate defeating the maze whenâ€|

"Ruffnut, tell me now; am I back where I started?"

She nodded. "I'm afraid so."

I groaned, turning around to plunge back into the maze.

"Hey, so, technically, I'm not supposed to do this, but since you're cute, I thought I might point you in the right dirâ€"

"No. Thank you.\_ Really\_." A flush rose to my cheeks. "I think I'll go it alone."

"Hmph. Fine. Whatever." She sagged back against the wall, and I continued on alone.

It took several wrong turns, several more occasions where Tuffnut grabbed me and scared me, and a couple promises that there was, indeed, an emergency exit in case I needed one, before I found the pathway myself, but when I had, I received some half-hearted applause from the twins.

"So. What did you think? Horrible?" Tuffnut grinned.

"Umâ€|" I hesitated. "Yeah, it wasâ€|it was pretty bad."

"But? Any room for improvement?"

"C'mon, we're hoping to make other people scream like you did," Ruffnut threw in.

I blushed. "I didn'tâ€"never mind. Iâ€|well, it was trickyâ€|difficult, really, and I'm normally pretty good with mazes. And, uh, Ruffnut had me ready to hop on Toothless and take off when she jumped out at me, so it was definitely frightening. But I would add something \_extra\_. You know?"

"Like what?" Tuffnut appeared thoughtful, like he was actually taking my words into account.

"Maybe another room," I ventured. "You could have more people working, too, so it feels like there's a lot going on behind the scenes. Oh!" I brightened as a new idea occurred to me. "You could even get somebody to wander the maze who can remove people from it if they're caught by him."

"Yeah!"

"And somebody to protect people from getting caught!"

"And if they're caught, they have to help scare people in the maze!"

"Hang on," Tuffnut gave me a strange look. "You found out about the maze, you didn't turn us in, you said our maze was okay, and you ran it through...and now you're giving us ideas to make it scarier?"

The twins exchanged a glance.

\_"Who are you and what have you done with Hiccup?"\_

## 129. Christmas Chapter: Family Tree

Untold

### Chapter 129 - Family Tree (Christmas Special!)

Summary: Hiccup's in dire need of Snoggletog cheer.

**\*\*A/N:** Merry Christmas, everyone! And, of course, I hope you all have a wonderful new year and memorable holidays! Thank you guys so much for sticking with this story, even when it sucked and dragged and I hated it; I know it wasn't always easy, but we're closing in on nearly two years now and you guys have made this story such a delight to work on. Even when I'm going through hell in real life, you guys' reviews make it all worthwhile. So, really, thank you guys. May you have a fantastic holiday, whatever you celebrate. And, of course, I hope you have a merry, bright, and joyous Snoggletog :) **\*\***

**\*\*Also,** I'm really sorry I haven't been on - for like, the whole month of December, wow - but I just haven't had the time, really. The holidays were pretty crazy this year, and some other factors also got in my way. I predict I'll be pretty busy from now on, but that's okay. I'm going to have a really good year, I hope. This also hopefully explains the lack of birthday chapters - I just couldn't update for anyone in December, and I feel horrible, so to everyone who asked for a birthday chapter in December, I'm really sorry, but I just can't deliver. **\*\***

**\*\*Anyway,** this one-shot was really tough to write. One of the main reasons for this was, I guess, because I really wanted the chapter to begin featuring a kind of melancholy, lonely, depressed Hiccup who just isn't feeling it this year, and by the end of the chapter, I was hoping for him to experience some closure, but every time I tried, it seemed to come out sloppy and rushed. Closure cannot be rushed. And I guess it's not really closure - well, it is of a sort. And since I showcased Hiccup's reluctance in the first bit, I felt that any kind of positive response to Stoick's affection would just make it seem like he's taking back everything he said. Which he's not. I meant for it to feel like he experiences a single moment of peace, at the end, and it gives him hope. Just tell me if I achieved that. This was also extremely difficult for me to pen because I really like writing chapters all at once, and I couldn't do that with this one. I just had to write it in the snatches of time I did get, and I feel it made for a slightly weaker chapter than it could have been, had I managed to write it all at once. But alas, I lack time and speed, and this was the best I could give you. **\*\***

**\*\*You know,** this one-shot brings back so many memories xDDDD a couple years ago, I made up a parody to Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer, and it was called something like...Hiccup the weakest Viking? I can't remember. I remember one part was like, "They never let poor Hiccup join in their Viking games" or Bashyball games or something. Twas fun. xD I wish I could remember the whole thing. I think there was something in there like, "then one foggy day on Berk, Hiccup went to the woods and Toothless with his fire so bright befriended Hiccup

that night" even though obvs he didn't at first xD But it was such a fun parody and I wish I could remember the whole thing. I never wrote it down. Ah, well. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Belonging.<p>

There were a million tribes. Somewhere out there, across seas and over mountains, in caves and forests and on shores, there were other people. Somewhere out there, other people, other Vikings, were fighting wars, pillaging from each other, taunting and teasing each other, grabbing boats and sailing away from islands, or sitting quietly by firesides with warm drinks, fur cloaks draped around broad shoulders as the flames in the hearth popped and crackled and hissed.

From the farthest, coldest reaches of the north to the tropical, sunny islands to the south, there were people everywhere; from the soundless, savage Murderous to the quiet, levelheaded Peaceables, the Archipelago was a whirlwind of color and sound and life.

And every Viking belonged to a tribe. Every person had an island to return to, after a long, hard journey on the wild and windy seas. Everybody had at least a handful of people who would smile at them, hug them, and welcome them home. Every person had somebody or someplace to return to, and everybody had a reason to keep returning. Every person had somebody they loved limitlessly, somebody who loved them. Everybody belonged to someone, belonged somewhere.

Except me.

For years, I'd tricked myself into believing that I belonged on Outcast Island; that there were people who loved me there, that deep down, Alvin really cared about me, really loved me.

I'd been wrong.

I'd spent my life assuaging my own fears with pretty lies, told myself that of course I had human friends, of course Alvin loved meâ€|and then he locked me in a cell.

He beat me, whipped me, told me I was nothing. And worse than all of that, worse than threats and insults, bruises or whip lashes, he'd hurt Toothless. The instant he reached out thick, grimy fingers with the intent to harm my dragon, he'd become unforgivable.

I was too gentle â€" too weak, I guess â€" to be an Outcast. I'd never really fit in; I'd always sort of been an outcast among Outcasts, and the pain of the fact ran deep. So I finally faced the truth, instead of hiding from it: I was not an Outcast. Alvin did not love me. Maybe I was not worthy of it. Either way, I'd been lying all these years. I wasn't an Outcast. Born to them, maybe, bound by blood, imprisoned by walls and chains, but my spirit wasn't an Outcast spirit, and it wasn't caged like my body.

I was not an Outcast.

I didn't belong anywhere. I could swim or sail the seas all I wanted, glide on the clouds, slay the monsters, wield the weapons, kiss the

maidens, andâ€|for what? There was no one there at the end of the day to hold me when the world got to be too much; nobody to tell me they were proud of me, nobody to take the sword from my hand. When I grew weary of the battle, there was no one to take over for me, to whisper that they could handle it, and that they would protect me.

I had no one that I really mattered to, no human to belong to, so completely and utterly, like other Vikings.

I'd lived four years in a state of flying. I drifted high above the Archipelago, looking down on the other islands, and occasionally I'd get close; my feet would hover, and I would hang unsupported only an inch or two above solid earth, aching to land, to fall, to let myself go and collapse onto waving, soft grass or wet, rough sand. I would gaze longingly at the ground, aching to land, for once, to finally have another tribe, another family to call my own.

But no matter how close I came to touching the ground, I never did. I couldn't. In good conscience, I couldn't inflict my company on other people, to become or try to become part of a family, knowing what I knew, knowing who I was, knowing that I came from Outcast Island. I never landed.

Sometimes people told me to get lost long before I ever considered landing; just told me to stop hanging around, that they were tired of me. So I fled then, too, taking off, never looking back, never allowing to think of what I could have there, because it was no use dwelling on things I couldn't have.

I was alone. I was lost and alone and I wasn't wanted.

I nearly landed on Berk.

Well, physically, I did. But I was a hundred feet in the air that day, arms out by my sides for balance, and there I hung, telling lies, starting over, taking chances, weaving webs.

And Stoick spoke to me.

Every smile, every touch, every word, every gesture of affection sent me hurtling toward the ground at a faster pace than I wanted. But he was paying me attention and asking nothing in return, and he actually seemed like he might not mind me so much.

How many breathless days had I hovered, asking myself if I could land, if I could ever take that final step, that first step onto solid ground, land and belong to somebodyâ€| Belonging to somebodyâ€|see, I was scared to trust somebody else enough to ever belong to them. The only person I belonged to was Toothless, butâ€|but he wasn't a human. I wanted human family. I needed the affection of a mother or a father. I craved the attention of a human being like I craved food and water.

And maybe, I thought to myself, after a long while, maybe Stoick wanted me to belong to him. Maybe he wanted to be that person waiting for me at the end of the day with a smile and a hug and a 'welcome home' whispered in my ear. Maybe I could finally belong somewhere, finally take a breath and land. I was so tired staying up in the air all the timeâ€|four years was a long time to sleep with one eye open, to fly and fly and never land.

The day after Snoggletog, I made the decision for real: I was going to trust Stoick. I was going to trust him completely, and I was going to tell him, soon, that I was an Outcast, that I didn't even consider myself part of their tribe and I was really sorry that I lied. And I imagined a beautiful scenario where he pulled me into one of those hugs where everything feels safe and warm and okay, and he told me he didn't care at all because as far as he was concerned, I was his, and he loved me no matter what. I imagined that he would call me his son, start telling people I was his child, and I would never ever have to see Alvin again and I would grow up happy and loved, and Stoick would hold me when the world got to be too much, and he would tell me he was proud of me. He would love me no matter what, and even when I was being weak or stupid, he would be blind to it and just love me anyway, because I would be his kid, not Alvin's.

I just barely hovered over the ground that day, gazing down at the island, planning to land as soon as Stoick got back from his peace treaty signing. I would be loved, and wanted, and I wouldn't have to depend on myself or go hungry because I couldn't scrounge food anymore. I would finally have somebody.

I admit I wasn't expecting everything to work out completely; of course, Stoick would probably be a little upset when he initially heard I was an Outcast, but once I explained the situation, he would calm down, see my side, and forgive me anyway. Besides, he'd told me he'd never hurt me. He'd said that. He'd promised. He was a good person.

But I never got the chance to tell him.

The Murderous showed up, and they told everyone the secrets I was trying so hard to keep, and it was just like a bad dream, Gobber staring at me in horror and it killed me because Gobber wasn't like Stoick, he wasn't a dad, but he was my friend, and the first person on Berk who'd shown me kindness, and he looked so disgusted and horrified and shockedâ€¦

And then Stoick came back. And he heard.

\_\_And he didn't want me anymore. \_\_

I was higher than I had ever been. I couldn't see the islands beneath me anymore, and even then, I kept going, because I couldn't take it. I couldn't bear seeing all these people, all these tribes with all their perfect lives and families and knowing I would never be part of that, knowing I would just be the outcast, the dirty little freak who couldn't find anywhere to belong, the pathetic little hiccup who wanted so badly to be wanted, and had to lie to even get people to think highly of him.

Stoick had just been tolerating me. He never really loved me. Never. Everything that had happened in those six monthsâ€¦it was all gone. It didn't matter. It had never mattered. Nothing mattered. He didn't love me.

Every tear stung bitterly when it fell down my cheek.

I would never, ever land. I would never even get close to landing again, because look where it had gotten me.

It was safer to stay in the air, because if I got too close to the earth, I could end up loving other people and it would just hurt worse when they hurt me.

It was easier to not belong to anyone, and I was doing fine with just Toothless. But now that I knew the truth, it was harder to keep the lie going. Still, dragons didn't let you down the way people did.

So I would never belong. I would never come down. That would work.

I thought I might land, might come down, when Stoick told me I was his son. It was everything I'd wanted, and suddenly he was doing everything I'd imagined him doing, but the reality was stale and comfortless next to the imagined scenario I'd cooked up. He didn't really want me. But he was so nice that he felt bad about hurting me, so even though I was an Outcast, even though I was stupid and broken and nothing, he apologized and tried to make it better, but it didn't matter. Even when he held me as tears coursed down my face, I wouldn't land, I wouldn't land, I wouldn'tâ€¦

I'd wanted to. Oh, how I'd wanted to reveal everything, and it infuriated me that I had withstood beatings so brutal I had to block them out just to function, but at Stoick's touch, his hands on my shoulders and his beard tickling my nose, his whispers that he was sorry and that he loved meâ€¦ that was enough to make me start sobbing and ready to spill everything about myself?

I would never touch the ground. And Stoick was never touching me again. Never. Because if his hands reached to hurt me, it would be more than I could take, after tasting the warm affection. And if his hands reached to comfort me, I would touch the ground. I would land. And I couldn't do that. I couldn't.

So I smiled at him when he smiled at me, and I laughed at his jokes when he told them, but I still shoved the Viking helmet he'd given me under the bed, and I would never love him too much, because if I did, I would just get hurt. I would give him the most distant, detached love I knew.

But I would never land, never ground myself and risk being hurt like that again. If there was anything I'd learned from that night, it was this: I didn't belong anywhere, and I was supposed to be alone. It was better to be alone.

I wondered sometimes why I still even stayed on Berk; if anything, I should have left.

I risked getting attached again by staying; I risked annoying Stoick, or screwing up so massively that he decided to just throw me out again. I had to see the people, face the shame of seeing the contempt and pity in their eyes, because they knew, they knew how close I'd come to landing.

And I was so ashamed.

I shook myself out of my reverie; I wasn't eager to inspect my feelings too closely, and if I didn't stop right now, I would start thinking about last Snoggletog and how nice that had been, and how warm Stoick's arms felt when they were wrapped around me, and how

he'd rocked me gently in his arms as he took me up, and how he'd released me carefully and " I fantasized " unwillingly, like maybe he didn't want to let me go. And I remembered the thin red quilt covered suddenly by a fur cloak that smelled like pinecones and winter and it smelled like home because it smelled like Stoick and Berk was my home right then and I was pretending Stoick was my father. I remembered the words, how I whispered, "Good night, Dad," and how he hadn't hit me for calling him that, how he'd let me, and how he'd called me son. And of course now I knew he didn't actually mean 'son', that it had just been a nickname and I'd taken it and run with it and misread all his signals, but at the time, the name had given me so much happiness. Alvin had never called me son. He'd never carried me to bed, or tried to make sure I was warm and safe and happy

No. I couldn't land.

I couldn't even think about it, or I'd go crazy.

"C'mon, Toothless." I patted the dragon's nose, trying to force a smile for him. "They'll probably be waking up soon, and we need to be there to help decorate for Snoggletog." The fake smile I'd conjured slipped off my face as soon as I spoke the word; as if I needed any other reminder about last year.

Maybe Toothless sensed the emotions raging within me, because he nudged questioningly at my hip, green eyes widening in concern.

I shook off the memories. "Nothing, bud. I'm fine." He did not need to be reminded of what had happened. To avoid further questioning, I stood and slid to the edge of the roof, pausing then and waiting for him.

When he responded, I winced at the thumping of his heavy footfalls; I liked sitting on the roof to think, but I wasn't fond of the occasional rude awakenings I knew Stoick received.

I swung one leg over his back, and a bit of melancholy wore away as I remembered twelve-year-old me jumping on his back with too much enthusiasm and accidentally kicking him in the side. Four years later, I knew to watch where I put my feet. When I'd fixed myself in the saddle reasonably securely, Toothless snapped his wings out and we rolled, sideways off the roof, wind rushing past us and the ground growing larger beneath us until he ended the fall, taking us suddenly up into the sky, looping once around the island before returning, hovering a little way above the island.

It was still pretty early, even when I got back, so I wasn't surprised to find that most people were still asleep, though the burly figures of a couple Vikings dotted the landscape; I could hear a few people chatting and laughing even from where we hovered, and the knowledge made me strangely lonely. Thor knew I wasn't going to be joining in the festivities this year. I planned to go into the Great Hall when the party started tomorrow night, just like last year, but I wasn't planning to stay. Suffice to say, I didn't really have a lot of Snoggletog spirit this year.

"C'mon, bud," I rested a hand on Toothless' head, trying to inject some cheer into my voice. "Let's go." I made sure to fix my features into a smile before joining the rest of the village.



\* \* \*

><p>The day passed in a whirlwind of last-minute preparations.<p>

Almost the instant I climbed from Toothless' back, Astrid was there at my side, shoving green and red baubles in my hands and telling me to tie them onto the tree in any bare spaces I spotted. And when I had finished my task and glided back down to the ground, Gobber told me to go around the village pinning mistletoe over any doorways I found. This was fine until I got to the twins' house, and Tuffnut came out just after I had finished nailing the leaf. When he realized what I was doing, his eyes widened and he scrambled away, screaming that he would not kiss me for all the gold in the Viking lands. Ruffnut offered to take his place. I declined.

Ruffnut was the least of my problems, though; when no less than forty-eight people opened their doors at inopportune moments, it left me with two options: to either kiss them or bolt. It was an easy decision.

I thought maybe everything was done after that, but Hoark found me wandering aimlessly around the village and told me to get to the Great Hall and see what I could do there. The huge wooden building was filled with cheerful Vikings scrubbing at tables and dusting ash off the hearth, singing or whistling along to whatever Snoggletog carol struck their fancy. I hovered by the entrance until Gobber handed me a broom.

It was a bit of time later before I had swept up the assorted debris from the floorboards, and immediately after that, Ms. Ingerman thrust an apron at me and ushered me into another, smaller, warmer area. The reason for the heat was obvious to me at once: several cauldrons boiled over roaring fires, and a few people were gingerly prodding or stirring the pots' contents with spoons.

I tried to explain that I wasn't much of a cook, and I might as well burn the dinner, but Ms. Ingerman just shoved me into the space between her and Gobber; the latter didn't really do much work, but cracked jokes loudly for the benefit of everyone standing around, and Ms. Ingerman and Fishlegs more than made up for his inactivity. Stirring and mixing like the gods themselves expected a meal the following day, the mother and son didn't even glance up when the twins joined the procession, pushed in there by a stern Mr. Thorston. " from the quick conversation he had with Gobber, I gathered that he'd caught his children messing up the decorations.

I pretended not to notice when Ruffnut looked at me.

"Here, taste this," Ms. Ingerman said, tapping me on the shoulder; when I opened my mouth to refuse, she popped the food in there anyway.

I sent her a glare, but ate it anyway " you did\_ not\_ waste food on Outcast Island, and I assumed it'd be the same thing here.

But I didn't want to waste this, I realized suddenly; it was the best salmon I had ever tasted in my life.

"What's wrong with it?" she demanded, the instant I'd swallowed. "I know something is, I just can't pinpoint what."

"Nothing's wrong with it," I responded honestly. "It was great, what did you add?"

"A few spices," she said dismissively. "A dash of garlic and onion goes a long way."

"Well, it's great, so don't worry," I shot her a smile.

"Why does Hiccup get the sample?" Tuffnut demanded indignantly.

"Because he doesn't sample everything," Fishlegs pointed out.

Tuffnut made a face, but his hands were covered in some sort of sticky, brownish substance, giving him away completely.

By the time I handed my apron back and Ms. Ingerman had thanked me for helping â€" I thought about telling her that I hadn't had a choice, but decided to hold my tongue â€" I was exhausted. Under Gobber's instruction, I swept the steps leading up to the Great Hall and, after checking in with Stoick to make sure I wasn't needed anywhere else, I walked the path to his house and fell gratefully into the upstairs bed.

\* \* \*

><p>The next day went exactly as I imagined it.<p>

By the time I woke up that morning, Stoick had left the house, and I skipped breakfast without any fuss, slipping out the back door and into the skies with Toothless. The wind was bitter and frigid this high up, the gray clouds moved sluggishly across a steel-colored sky, and winter sunlight spilled in muted golden rays down on us. Flecks of white swirled endlessly around us, either slipping down into the ocean, or dancing down to Berk's shores, and joining the powder clustered there from the previous night.

I clicked down on the pedal with my prosthetic, extending the tail. "C'mon, bud. Let's go."

We stayed up in the sky until noon arrived, and though I still wasn't hungry, I knew it wasn't fair to Toothless to make him keep flying on an empty stomach, so I reluctantly flew us to the Great Hall, landing at the top of the snow-dusted steps. Toothless helped me push the door open, and together we entered the building; after the blinding sunlight and biting wind, the Great Hall seemed uncomfortably warm and dark. I was tempted to go over and warm up by the hearth while Toothless ate, but there were other people gathered around doing just that, and solitude was what I had sought ever since the holiday season had started.

I spotted Astrid standing there, and Gobber, too, so I just grabbed up a couple perch and cod for Toothless, patting him on the head while he chewed. Knowing he'd try to talk me into eating once he'd sated his own hunger, I exited the Hall before he had finished the last bite, stepping out into the brisk winter air.

I spent the afternoon with Toothless, watching the snow fall or circling the island on his back, eventually hunkering down in a semi-warm spot and letting him rest his head on my knees, scratching him under the chin absently. I tried to keep the mood light-hearted, struggled to smile whenever my dragon looked at me, but the instant the green eyes slipped closed, an expression of bliss on his scaly face, I exhaled heavily, like I was releasing a breath I'd been holding all day. I wasn't willing to admit it, even to myself, but I was lonely. Toothless was my best friend, and the best thing that had ever happened to me, but I was still lonely, still wished for human company. No matter how many times Gobber told me I acted like one, I wasn't a dragon, and I couldn't pretend I was, not anymore.

I rested my head on top of my dragon's, listening to his breathing, deep and even, his body warming my legs. I'd been scratching him under the chin earlier, but somehow I'd dipped lower, and now my fingers found his heartbeat instead, slower than a human's, steady, a comforting thrum beneath my hand.

It didn't matter that I wasn't a dragon, and Toothless was. He was the best family I had ever had, my best friend, the best thing that had ever happened to me, and yes, knowing Stoick didn't want me, knowing he'd never loved me, it still hurt, and it always would, but I had Toothless, and with him, I could survive anything.

I clung to this peace in an effort to quiet the raging loneliness inside me.

\* \* \*

><p>By the time I arrived at the Great Hall that night, nearly everyone else was already there. The food we'd cooked the previous evening was set out on the wooden tables, the tempting scents wafting over to me from where I stood in the doorway; I recognized the garlic-and-onion fish Ms. Ingerman had agonized over, and the pudding Fishlegs had made.<p>

Nobody appeared to be eating quite yet; most people were still milling around, talking to others, exchanging presents. A few early arrivals had clustered close to the hearth, warming their hands and singing Snoggletog songs in low murmurs.

Remembering last year, and how Gobber had tried so hard to convince me to join in the singing, I stayed far away from that side of the Hall.

I lingered by the door, Toothless at my side, his head steady and reassuring beneath my fingers. I allowed my eyes to sweep the crowd, watching lovers seek dark corners, young children opening presents and thanking their parents excitedly, one little girl so enthusiastic she actually hugged her father's legs, sending them both toppling.

Gobber's tuneless voice drew my gaze across the room, back to the hearth, where he stood with the other carolers, proudly belting the words out. Astrid sat in a chair next to her mother, and when she noticed me, she sent me a quick, tight smile and a little wave. Fishlegs and his mother were over by the food tables, but they weren't eating, either; they stuck closely to each other, whispering

in low voices.

Spitelout sat in a corner, nursing a mug of mead and looking sullen while Snotlout was telling a joke to a small crowd of people on the other side of the Hall; the two of them were very obviously not looking at each other.

I hadn't really expected the twins to be here, but there they were, too, on the other side of Gobber, singing with the other Vikings; on closer inspection, though, I realized they weren't really singing, just replacing every word they could with foul swears or offensive slang.

A few couples stepped into the empty space near the door and started dancing slowly, their eyes bright with affection and happiness.

I watched Gobber finish one carol and limp over to the nearest empty table to fix himself a mug of eggnog or mead â€" maybe both. It was hard to tell with him. The twins went over to the food tables. I could see Stoick shaking hands with a few people on the other side of the Hall, wishing them merry nights, smiling warmly at them until they departed.

I drew closer to the door again, reaching for the wood, wishing to push it open and vanish into the snowy night, but I forced myself to keep standing there, to edge a little closer. I forced myself to duck past waltzing couples and draw nearer to the food tables. I still wasn't hungry, but I grabbed up a basket of fish for Toothless and letting him eat while I glanced around the party again. Three more minutes, I bargained with myself. Just three more minutes and then I could leave.

So I stood there, and I waited, waving tentatively to Snotlout when our eyes met, hoping he wouldn't see this as an invitation to talk to me; I didn't want to get involved in a conversation and find myself scrounging for an excuse to leave it later.

\_Three more minutes.\_

I edged a little closer to the door, reaching instinctively for Toothless before realizing he was still over by the food table, emptying the basket of fish.

\_Two more minutes, and fifty-five seconds.\_

Staring at a crack in the floorboards, I recalled how long Gobber had spent last year telling me I needed to come to the party; how I hadn't lived until I'd been to a Berk Snoggletog celebration; how by the end of the night, half the village populace was drunk as hell; how the wreaths fixed on the Great Hall doors glittered with the fallen snow, how everyone put aside feuds and arguments for this one night; how it was his favorite holiday, and if I gave it a chance, it could be mine, too.

This year, he hadn't spoken more than two sentences to me in the last four days.

Last year, Gobber had found me frantically trying to hide a sword I'd crafted for Stoick; last year, Stoick had caught me when I was trying to inconspicuously slip the blade on his porch and leave; last year,

he'd invited me into his house, sat me down at his table, told me to wait, and disappeared for a minute, and when he'd returned, he'd been carrying a helmet; last year, he had put me in bed and called me son.

This year, he hadn't even looked in my direction for maybe two straight weeks.

I clenched my hands into fists and turned on my heel, tearing my eyes off the wooden floor. I couldn't stay. To hell with the bargains and promises I'd made; I needed to get out of here, now. I couldn't take it, couldn't stand thinking about how not alone I'd been last year, about how last year, I'd almost landed.

I crashed through the half-open doors, suddenly not caring how much noise I made, not caring who saw me leave and those who didn't, not caring about those too drunk to make out my identity. I didn't even care if Toothless followed me or not. I just wanted out. I didn't want to even be me right now. Just for a minute, I needed to be alone, away, where I couldn't hear other people laughing and teasing and acting like family. I needed to get out.

I hit the steps at a dead run, boots pounding on the icy stairwell. When I reached the bottom, I didn't bother looking back to make sure Toothless was following; I just kept going, trudging through the snow, smearing white powder on the streets. Everything about this whole night was ridiculous. Damn Snoggletog. Damn the stupid trees, and the stupid snow, and the stupid wreaths and foods and songs and people who weren't alone and people who never had been and the people who looked right through me and the people who couldn't look me in the eye anymore because of what I was and damn those people who knew I'd almost landed, damn those people who still remembered last year, and damn everyone in the whole world and \_families\_—

I stopped short, a street over from the center of town, drawing in a deep breath of winter air; the cold stung my lungs when I inhaled, but that was okay. I hadn't even realized where I was going in my distress, but now I relaxed, drawing breath, pausing, and looking up at the black sky above me, dim starlight the only illumination. I stood there for a minute, ankle-deep in snow, fingers numb and frozen at my sides, staring up at the sky and seeking all the comfort but none of the sorrow from last year. And then I realized Toothless hadn't followed me, hadn't even noticed I was gone, and there was no comfort in last year because it didn't count, everything last year had been fake, and Stoick had never loved me, only tolerated me, and he'd only wanted me when I'd been the submissive boy from the Peaceable Tribe, and he'd never wanted me since he'd figured out what I was and I wished I had been the boy from last year, wished I could rewind the clock and stop myself from being raised on Outcast Island, I wished I could go back in time and to the Peaceables, wished I could breathe life in the boy I had created last year.

I wished I could\_ belong\_.

Tears burned my eyes as they threatened to cascade down my cheeks and I didn't care. Suddenly, I didn't care whether I was strong or weak or good or bad, I just wanted to cry, and I wanted somebody to want me and love me, and I wanted to belong to somebody.

"Hiccup!" The loud voice hit my ears with more force than a punch,

and my eyes widened as equal parts recognition and shock flooded me. I hastily swiped my eyes free of tears on my sleeve, turning to face Stoick, barreling excitedly toward me with Toothless loping a little ways beside and in front of him. I tried to smile when I saw them, but inwardly, I wondered. What cause did Stoick have to visit me this year? What was he doing here now?

When he'd reached me, he placed a hand on my shoulder, smile still fixed on his face; for a silent minute, his eyes searched my face, and whatever he found there made the smile slip off his lips. "Are you alright?"

I looked away, avoiding his gaze and Toothless'. "Yeah."

He reached to brush the hair back from my forehead, and I shrank away from his hand. It wasn't an instinctive gesture; everything in me craved the touch, but I forced myself to refuse it.

Something unfamiliar flickered in his eyes; anger, maybe? There was none in his tone when he spoke. "I was looking for you."

I nodded, but offered no response; a few hours earlier, I would have given anything for him to say those words, but now I just looked down at the snow, glittering dimly in the starlight.

Apparently wrong-footed due to my silence, he took a minute to speak again. "I brought you something."

I tore my gaze from the ground. "Did I leave something in the Great Hall?" The question sounded stupid the instant it tumbled off my lips, but it was the only solution I could think of.

A smile found its way onto his face again, but this time it was a sad one. "No, Hiccup, I meant a gift."

I blinked. "What?" \_A gift? For what? Ooh, I know, maybe he's trying to bribe me into leaving the island. \_I tried to banish the sarcastic thoughts as soon as they came, Toothless suddenly appearing on my other side, licking my palm.

"Hang on!" he reached inside the fur cloak he always wore, beginning to rifle through what was evidently an inside pocket before emerging with a piece of paper furled into a loose scroll, tied together with a bit of red ribbon. "It's too dark for you to see it out here, I think, you might have to go indoors!" "oh, wait, come here!" Without waiting for a response, he turned and began to walk swiftly toward the center of town, cutting through an unmapped alley and emerging in the village square, the Snoggletog tree surrounded loosely by huge wooden posts with flames crackling on the top.

He was so much faster than I was that by the time we reached the tree, I was completely out of breath; he waited until I'd regained a healthy air flow before handing the paper to me. Despite the burning fires, it was still pretty dark, and I fumbled with the ribbon for a minute before it finally fell off, and I unrolled it carefully. It was bigger than it looked, covered in scrawled names, untidy charcoal drawings of Vikings, and times dating back to the eighth century. Black lines crossed and intersected, spreading over the page like a giant spider's web. I studied the paper for a minute. I had never seen anything like it and wasn't quite sure what it was, but I didn't

want to disappoint Stoick. "Thank you."

When silence was my only answer, I wondered if I hadn't sounded sincere enough; lifting my gaze, I met his gray eyes. He didn't look angry, though. "You don't know what it is?"

"Umâ€|no," I admitted sheepishly.

"Alright, here," he came to stand behind me, pointing to the Viking drawn at the absolute top of the page â€" a grinning, muscled man with teeth dirtier than an Outcast's, and a blond braided beard flowing down over his chest. "This is a family tree, and that man there was the Viking who discovered Berk, and the founder of the Hooligan Tribe."

"Family tree?" I repeated, peering closely at the paper.

"It's us," he put a hand on my shoulder. "And everyone we're related to. We're descendants of the founder of the tribe â€" Harald is a very great-grandfather to you."

"Oh, wow." My breath exited my lungs in an exhale of wonder and delight.

"See? There's me, and your mother, and you." He smiled at me when I glanced up at him. I dropped my eyes back to the paper, following his finger, and finding his name linked with a pretty, smiling woman named Valka. Where their lines met, a third one had formed, leading down to me. On the other side of the paper, a line led from my uncle to my cousin â€" dropping my gaze farther, I found only the blank, yellowed page.

"That's for you," Stoick added, like he'd read my thoughts. "When you and Snotlout get married, andâ€"wellâ€|" he ruffled my hair fondly. "There's room for you."

It was hard to swallow around the sudden, hard knot in my throat; I couldn't believe Stoick had done this, stayed up Thor knew how late for Odin knew how many nights, quietly copying down everyone that I was even remotely related toâ€| "Thank you," I said, and this time, the words sounded absolutely sincere. "Iâ€|Iâ€|" But I just trailed off, because beyond this one expression of gratitude, I didn't even have the words, or a way to say them.

"Oh, flip it to the back," Stoick jumped in, and I obeyed immediately, turning the paper over and beginning to read the words printed on the opposite side.

It spoke of the first founder of Berk, Harald, being the first King of the Wilderwest or something like that, and being famous for this. The next passage spoke of his descendants, and their accomplishments. Certain phrases jumped out at me: \_famous for popularizing archery when the longbow was previously thought to be a weak weaponâ€|last King of the Wilderwestâ€| seventy-third chief of Berkâ€|\_

"Whatâ€|is all this? Is thisâ€|did youâ€|did you write all this?"

He nodded, and there was a hint of pride in his expression. "You said you wanted to get to know your family. You told me that once. I figure I can't make up for sixteen years lost, but maybe this will

help." He smiled, and I lowered my gaze back to the paper, blurred vision making it hard to read.

"Wait a minute, what am I doing on here?" My name was printed neatly at the very bottom of the page; the passage on me was one sentence, and devoid of the word 'outcast' 'failure' 'disappointment' 'hiccup' 'accident' or 'runt'. My eyes scanned the passage as quickly as I could " I felt Toothless shifting behind me, struggling to get closer to me, slipping his head under my hand. I stroked his scales gratefully; he always knew the way to comfort me.

\_Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III " the first Viking to ever ride a dragon, and the best son a chief could ask for.\_

Something exploded within my chest, unfamiliar, yet not unpleasant, and so intense it was almost painful; for a minute, I couldn't place what it was until it hit me.

Belonging.

### 130. Surprise

Untold

#### Chapter 130 - Surprise

Summary: Hiccup's first birthday on Berk.

\*\*A/N: I know it's March now but I will have you know I DID write this on February 28th. Sooo. I just lost myself somewhere within caffeine and worry and Treasure Planet fanfiction. This is my contribution for the leap year. A lot of people wanted to know if Hiccup would ever get the birthday party that Stoick planned for him in \_Starlight, Star Bright\_ and this was the only way I could honestly see it happening; this is set about six weeks after the events of \_Unbreakable\_, and that feels about right. I was purposely vague when I spoke of the war with the Outcasts, because I don't want to spoil anything. \*\*

\*\*It took a minute for me to decide how far after \_Unbreakable\_ to set it - on the one hand, there was a lot of realism at stake if I set it too early. Over the course of Unbreakable, the war brings damage and destruction to nearly every island in the Barbaric Archipelago, meaning that once the dust has cleared and the weapons have been set aside, there's a lot of rebuilding to do, not to mention the emotional repercussions upon the people. And like Hiccup lost Snotlout and Humongous, other people lost loved ones in the war. There was just a lot of grief and a lot of sorrow after the events of that story, and it would have been inappropriate to set this any earlier. But I feared setting it any later would take away the feeling of "newness" about the setting - everyone is still getting used to a peaceful Archipelago, to a place where there's no war or slavery, and Hiccup's still working to prevent any return of battle. So it took me a bit to fixate on six weeks.\*\*

\*\*Third, I set up a poll on my profile for what you'd like to see happen next in Untold, and I would have posted one of them, but three of the answers are in a tie, and I don't want to pick one over the



other. So please, can a few of you go vote? Maybe break the tie?\*

\* \* \*

><p>"SURPRISE!"<p>

It was hundreds of voices all at once, a sudden swell of noise rising up like a tidal wave, crashing over me with more force than Astrid's fist; it was so loud and sudden and unexpected that I nearly dropped the torch in my right hand, unsheathed my sword with my left, and gave a yell of my own.

"\_SHIT!" \_

It was all knee-jerk, just blind instinct; when I turned and saw the faces of fellow Hooligans staring back at me, quite a few of them laughing over my unexpected outburst, I relaxed, loosening my grip on the blade, eyes flicking from one face to another. "Whatâ€|what's going on? I thought we were having a meeting here."

"Happy birthday!" Fishlegs gave me a huge smile, Astrid put an arm around my shoulders in a quick hug, and Stoick looked happier than I'd ever seen him.

"Umâ€|" I blinked around at the Vikings surrounding me. "It'sâ€|it's not that I don't appreciate the\_ thought\_, butâ€|well, it's not my birthday."

"No, we know that," Stoick waved a dismissive hand. "Back in February, I had everything planned out, butâ€|" his gray eyes darkened visibly. "â€|you remember. It didn't work out."

"I thought we were in a meeting?"

"Hiccup, if we had told you up front we wanted to throw a party for you, what would your response have been?"

My answer was immediate; it required no thought. "No friggin' way."

"Exactly."

I really wasn't on board with the idea, but I also couldn't see any way to stop it without just saying I didn't want a party. And I didn't want to be rude. So I tried to smile, but it felt painfully awkward, and I was sure it looked it. "Umâ€|thank you." I wanted to speak in kinder, warmer terms but I wasn't sure I remembered how. I loved the people around me, loved them so much it hurt, but after everything that had happened, after everything I'd seen and been through in the war, I wasn't sure I remembered how to be kind or warm.

Stoick didn't seem to care, or even notice; he took me by the hand, beginning to lead me over to the center table. I tried to wrench my wrist free of his grip, but no such luck; I may have been King now, but that didn't mean anything when it came to my strength. I was still as skinny and weak as ever. I wasn't actually sure if I wanted a birthday party, whatever it was. And that made a new thought occur to me.

"Wait, wait, how does this work?" I protested.

"How does what work?" Stoick's eyes were kind when they fixed on me.

"This." I gestured with my free hand, the one still gripping the sword; remembering this, I sheathed the blade again. "A birthday party."

This made him pause; when the people who had overheard glanced at me, there was definite pity in their eyes, and I didn't like it.

"Iâ€|sorry," I shrugged one shoulder in a halfhearted way. "I justâ€|we didn't have a whole lot of birthday parties on Outcast Island. Probably none. I know I never had one." Shit, I was making it worse. "I think there would have been a celebration had I died, though." Oh, gods, I needed to shut up now.

Even Stoick looked pitying, and I could tell he was gearing up to try and tell me more useless stuff about how I didn't deserve that kind of treatment and how everyone here loved me and I was good enough, etc.

But like a Valkyrie sent straight from Odin, Astrid stepped in, took my hand and smiled. "Well, today, let's celebrate that you \_lived\_."

I couldn't help the small smile that flickered over my face. "Yeah, that sounds good."

End  
file.